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WINDY AND WARM
Chet Atkins

GUITAR BOOGIE
Tommy Emmanuel

**CAN'T FIND
MY WAY HOME**
Blind Faith

3 SONGS

**TOMMY EMMANUEL
JOHN KNOWLES
STEVE WARINER**

WHAT THE CERTIFIED GUITAR
PLAYERS LEARNED FROM

**CHET
ATKINS**

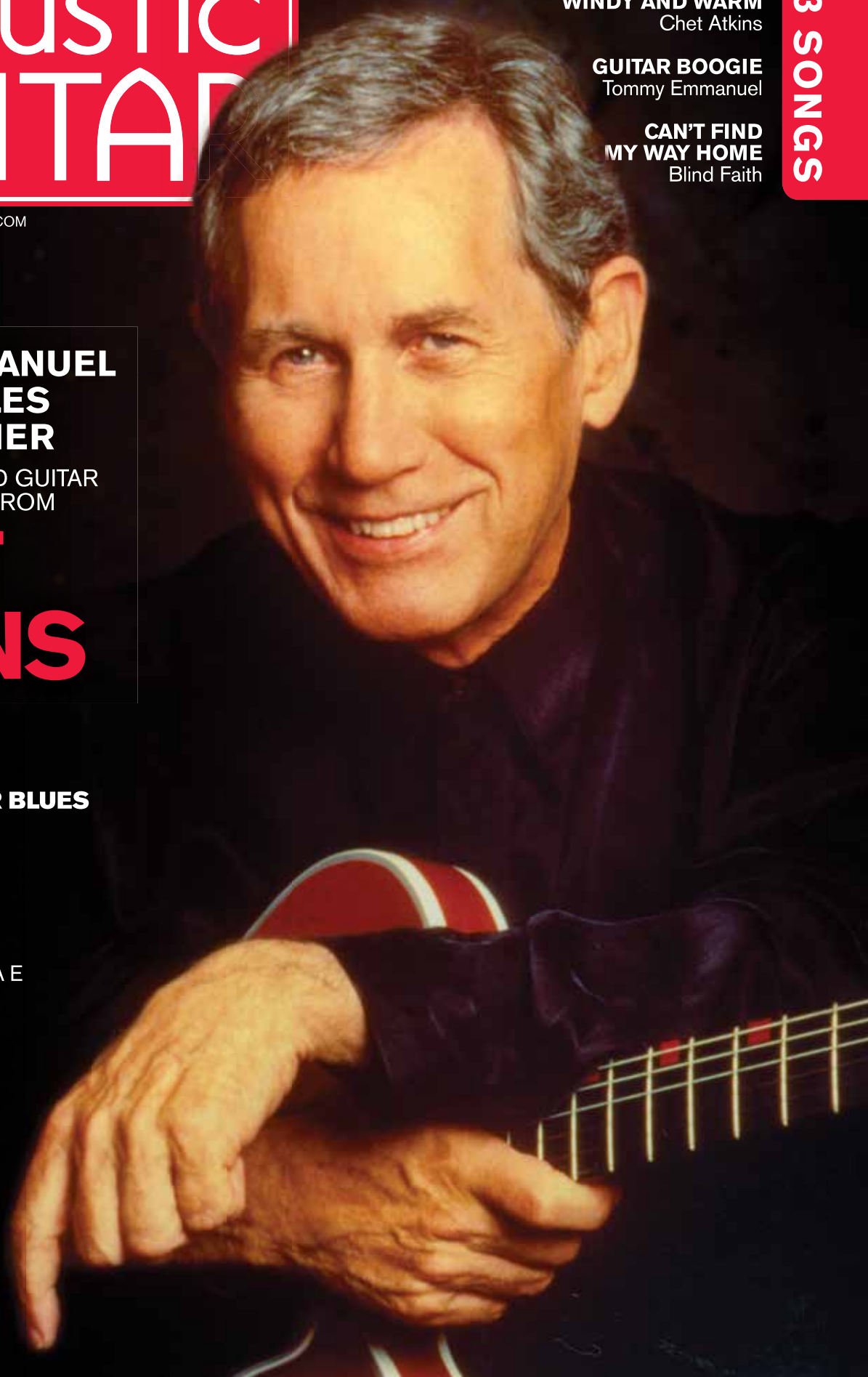
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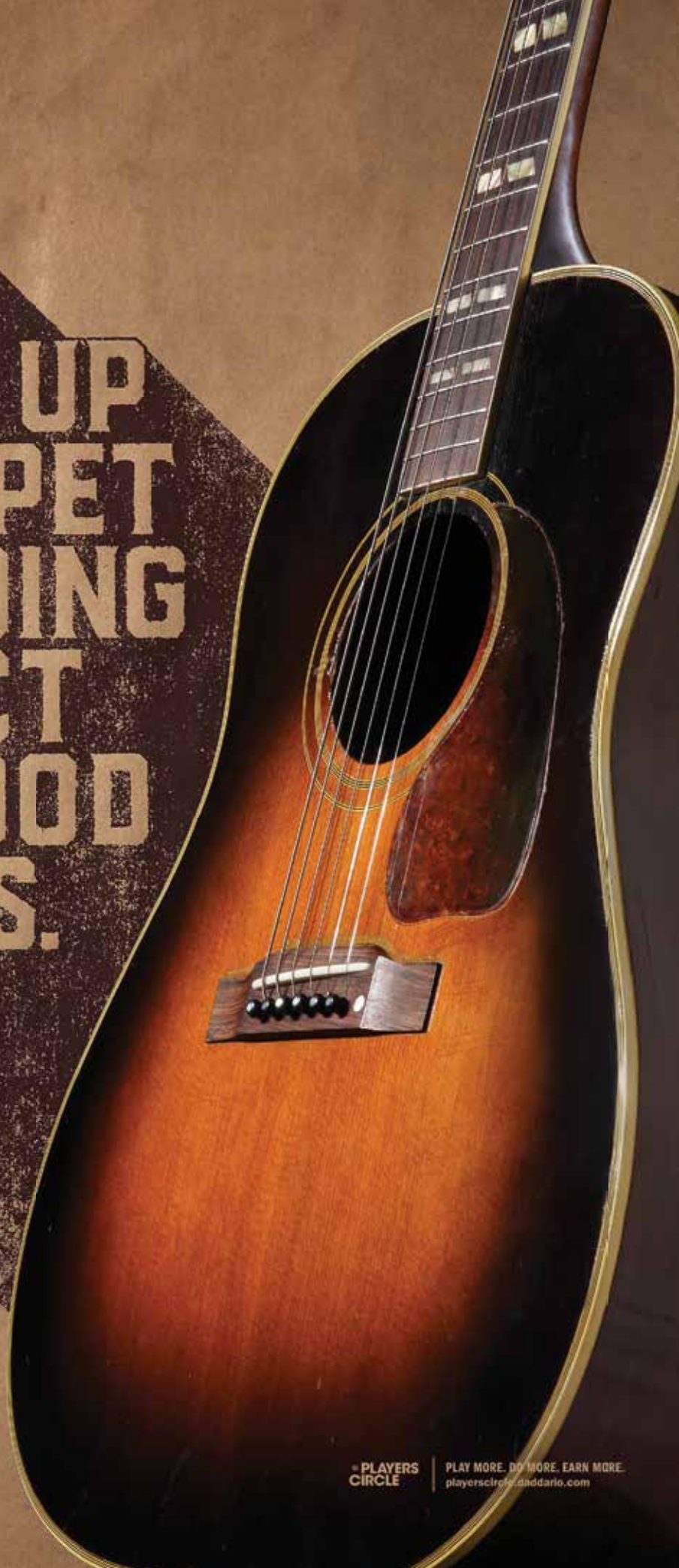
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DONN JONES

'Chet was smart because he was always looking for the best way to play something, the way that required the least amount of effort and moving around!'

JOHN KNOWLES
p.36

Features

20 The Blues in Jazz
Using the 12-bar form as a gateway to bebop improvisation
By Sean McGowan

26 Spirit of the West
A history of the humble, hardy cowboy guitar
By Michael Wright

32 Back in the Saddle Again
Cowboy guitars in a post-cowboy world
By Bill Leigh

Special Focus Chet Atkins' Certified Guitar Players

36 CGP Roundtable
Tommy Emmanuel, Steve Wariner, and John Knowles talk about Chet Atkins and his legacy and offer tips on Atkins' picking and fretting technique
By Bob Doerschuk

39 Chet Do We Appreciate
A visit to the Chet Atkins Appreciation Society's annual convention

Miscellany

10 The Front Porch
14 Feedback
81 Classifieds
81 Ad Index



Atkins also graced the cover of *Acoustic Guitar*'s 18th issue way back in 1993.

March 2018

Volume 28, No. 9, Issue 303

On the Cover

Chet Atkins



SETUP

16 Guitar Talk

James Elkington's new old sound

18 The Beat

An exhibit of early Martin guitars; Dylan, Neil Young acoustics auctioned

PLAY

54 Here's How

6 ways to prepare for a performance

56 The Basics

Learn to play fast by practicing slowly

58 Woodshed

Learn Delta bluesman Son House's intense style

62 Weekly Workout

How to build solos around chord shapes

SONGS

42 Windy and Warm

Tackling one of Chet Atkins' signature tunes

46 Guitar Boogie

Tommy Emmanuel shreds on this instrumental gem

68 Can't Find My Way Home

Steve Winwood's enduring Blind Faith classic

AG TRADE

70 Ask the Expert

How to shop for a used guitar, part 3

76 Review: Breedlove Oregon Concertina E Sitka Myrtle

A dazzling small-bodied flattop

78 Review: Hughes & Kettner Era 1 Amp

New model aimed at acoustic guitarists

MIXED MEDIA

80 Playlist

With *Bone on Bone*, Bruce Cockburn mixes anger and spiritual questing

82 Great Acoustics


1961 D'Angelico New Yorker Special



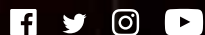
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Video Exclusives



CHET ATKINS' CERTIFIED GUITAR PLAYERS

Tommy Emmanuel, John Knowles, and Steve Wariner discuss the musical legacy of Mr. Guitar (p. 36).



SLOW AND STEADY

Learn to play fast by practicing slowly (p. 56).



HUGHES & KETTNER ERA 1

See and hear H&K's first acoustic amp in action (p. 78).



SOLDING SHAPES

How to build solos around chord shapes (p. 62).

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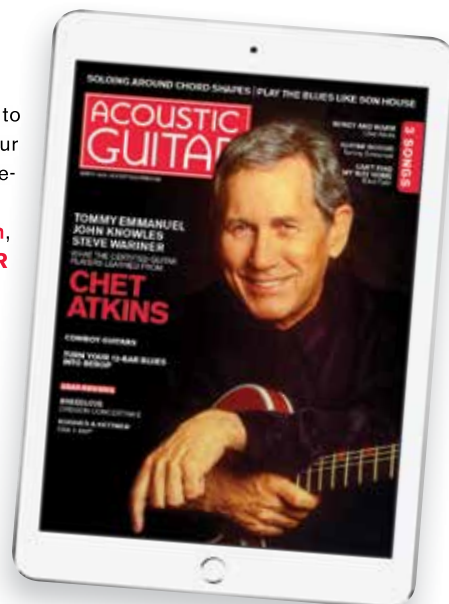
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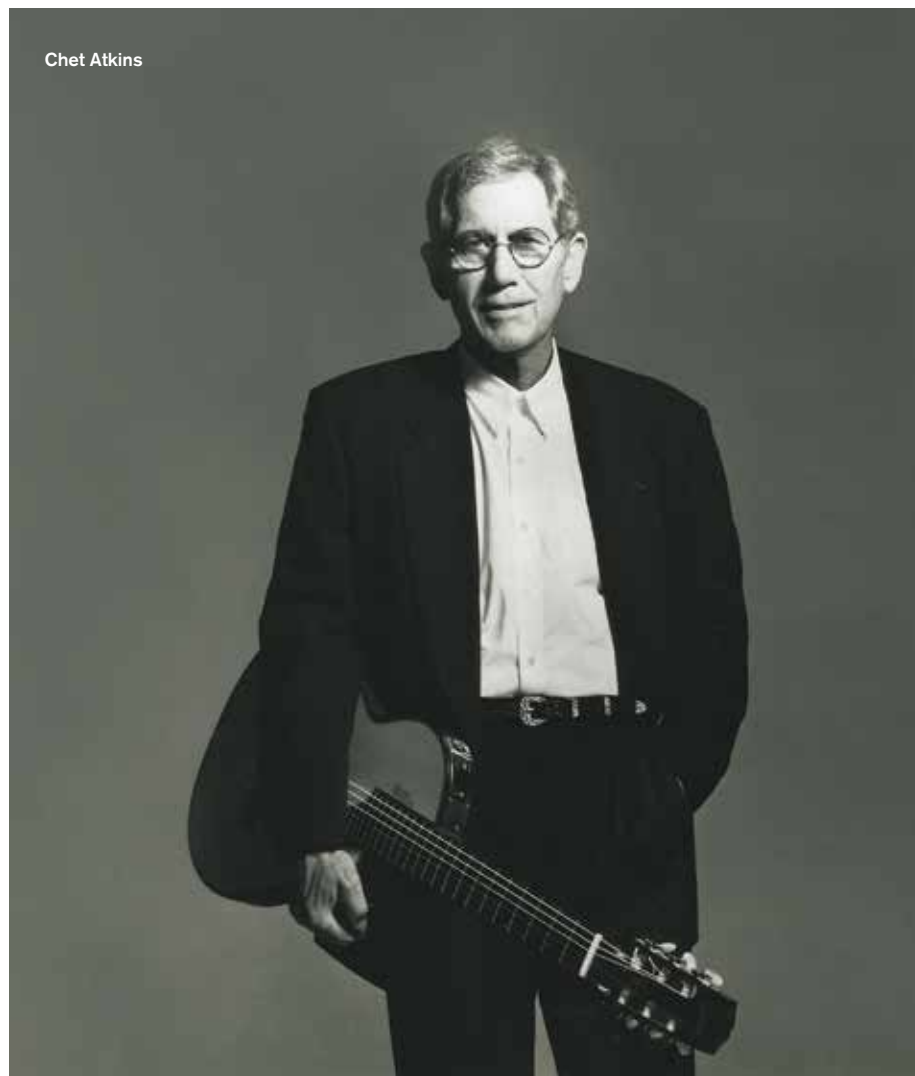
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Have you ever played the “two kinds of people” game? I first heard about it from a college roommate, who claimed the world could be divided between those who fold their toilet paper and those who crumble it. Less frivolously, Sir Isaiah Berlin suggested that writers and thinkers could be seen either as hedgehogs, who view the world through one powerful defining idea (think Karl Marx), or foxes, who are animated by the sheer multiplicity of things (try Shakespeare).

Bob Doerschuk’s feature in this issue about Chet Atkins and the five other Certified Guitar Players got me thinking about another dichotomy: revolutionaries and evolutionaries. Elvis Presley and Bob Dylan were arguably the most famous revolutionaries of American popular music, and like all revolutionaries they had acolytes and imitators, but showed little if any interest in nurturing those who adored them. Music journalists were very fond of asking, “Is [insert name here] the next Bob Dylan?”, but it’s doubtful Dylan himself knew or cared. By contrast, evolutionaries like Chet Atkins put tremendous energy into knowing and cultivating the next generation of guitarists, singers, and songwriters, and in Atkins’ remarkable case, he did it both as a musician and a record producer.

In his 2001 memoir, *Chet Atkins: Me and My Guitars*, Atkins explains the origins of the Certified Guitar Player moniker: “After I left RCA, I opened an office in a little townhouse on Music Row. . . . Almost every day, someone I was glad to see would drop by and we’d jam and trade licks. I loved it because I was learning new things on the guitar again. . . . This is when I gave myself the degree of Certified Guitar Player. I’ve always admired educated people, but I was a high school dropout. I always wanted to have a degree from someplace like Vanderbilt, but that never happened so I gave myself one and started adding the CGP after my name.”

The CGP degree may be rare—Atkins awarded it only to Steve Wariner, Jerry Reed, John Knowles, and Tommy Emmanuel, while his daughter honored Atkins’ longtime sideman, Paul Yandell, with the fifth and final one—but the community of Atkins’ followers



and torchbearers is prodigious. The Chet Atkins Appreciation Society has met annually in Nashville since 1983, and echoes of the original CGP’s signature sound can be heard in the playing of many powerful contemporary guitarists. That’s evolution.

By the way, I have my own favorite variation on the game. There are two kinds of people: Those who think the world is divided into two kinds of people, and those who know it’s not.

Elsewhere in this issue, take some time to learn one of Atkins’ signature instrumentals,

“Windy and Warm”; Tommy Emmanuel’s take on “Guitar Boogie”; and the Blind Faith classic “Can’t Find My Way Home.” You’ll also find Sean McGowan’s in-depth look at using the 12-bar blues form as a gateway to jazz improvisation, Michael Wright’s illustrated history of the humble, hardy cowboy guitar, a Pete Madsen primer on Delta bluesman Son House’s unique guitar style, and much more.

Let me know how you like it.

—David A. Lusterman, Editor
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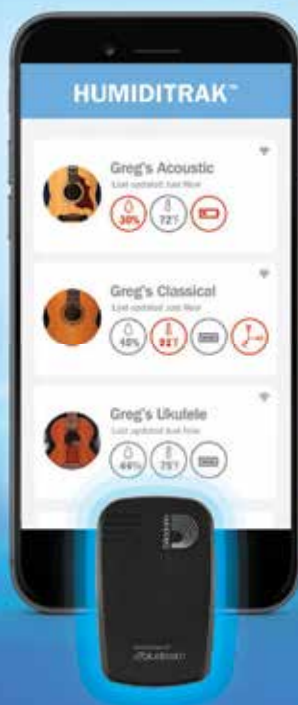
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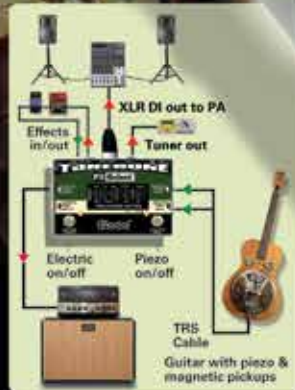
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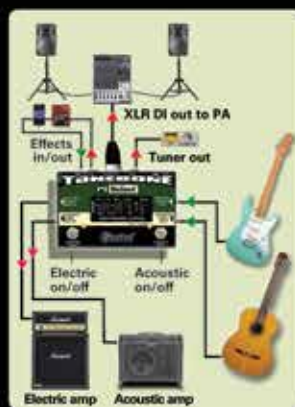
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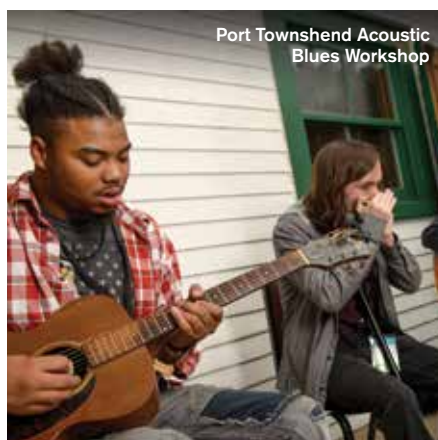
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FEEDBACK



UNCHARTED TERRITORIES

Your Top 25 Music Camps chart in the February 2018 issue was missing two dots in the Port Townsend Acoustic Blues Workshop column. The first is in the Blues category. I've attended this workshop for more than 20 years and can assure you that the blues are taught and played at Port Townsend. And very well, at that. The second omission is under the Student Performance heading. Two full nights per session are devoted to giving participants the stage to perform for their friends and peers. It is always an amazing and beneficial experience for everyone involved.

—Bruce Patterson, Kirkland, WA

I've attended Richard Thompson's Frets & Refrains camp since its inception, and just wanted to point out that there are two open-mic nights where students get to show their stuff. I think your chart on camp attributes missed that.

I'm primarily a builder and a player, but Sloan Wainwright, the camp's voice/stage presence coach, got me out of my shell so that I can get up in front of a crowd and perform. I can't say enough good things about her and the experience. It's a very worthwhile camp. Also, to keep the music alive, each year the camp offers scholarships to young musicians, funded by the campers' donations.

—Bill Schanck, Delmar, NY

LOCAL LOVE

Nestled in the quiet hills of the western Pennsylvania city of Greensburg is a family-operated music store by the name of Vittone's Music. Tony Vittone is a reserved, friendly owner graciously making all of his clientele feel welcomed. I first met him a little over 14 years ago, when I decided to get serious about studying guitar at

the age of 46. My pod of friends all know this store because we all met for the first time there. My guitar instructor, who is also the manager, has become my closest friend.

We talk about everything from how crappy the weather is to the downfall of politics. We hurt together when the news is bad and we're happy when it's not. Every Christmas Eve we gather in the store and drink a toast to the next year, fill ourselves with food brought from home, laugh, and have a wonderful time. I wish Norman Rockwell was still alive because I would commission him to capture the scene. When I read your (February 2018) Editor's Letter, I couldn't help but visualize the inside of Vittone's. God bless and thank you.

—Joe Pasquino, Greensburg, PA

I'm a retired music teacher, mostly piano, but the piano wasn't portable enough so I took up guitar. I have a treasured '92 Martin D-16H, which has a great sound—especially when better players than me let me hear what it can do. I enjoyed your letter regarding the music store in your area and appreciate your invitation to share stories about other musician-oriented shops. Here are two that come to mind: 1) Whitey's Music Store in Soldotna, Alaska, and 2) Ken's Guitars in Georgetown, Texas. Both are independently owned, and area musicians flock to jam and visit there, making for a joyous atmosphere. They buy accessories mostly, but occasionally dare to make a bigger purchase—not online or from a box store. The personal satisfaction of choosing and buying instruments, strings, and other accessories from brick-and-mortar stores has great appeal to me and other musicians I meet.

—Elena Corey, via email

TOYS IN THE ATTIC

Just read Mr. Bromberg's letter about Dick Rosmini (February 2018 Feedback), and the name sounded familiar. Wait a minute, I thought, I've got *Adventures for 6-String, 12-String and Banjo* in a box with so many other records from all those years ago! "Spider" John Koerner, a very young Glen Campbell, Tom Rush ... they all live on albums in my attic. I'll have to find the old box, get a record player, and see if they are playable. Thanks to Mr. Bromberg. Sometimes it's good to stir up the dust; you don't know what you'll find. Guard those calluses and keep pickin', everybody!

—Gordon Barnes, via email

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GUITAR TALK

ZORAN ORLIC

James Elkington's New Old Sound

At 45, he emerges as one of the more interesting songwriters and guitarists around

BY BLAIR JACKSON

An English guitarist who has been living in Chicago for many years, playing in bands and also working with the likes of Richard Thompson, Steve Gunn, Nathan Salsburg, and Wilco's Jeff Tweedy, James Elkington has reinvented himself as a singer-songwriter and quite extraordinary fingerstyle guitarist on his debut solo album, *Wintres Woma* ("the sound of winter" in Old English), recorded at the Wilco Loft studio in Chicago. In his wonderfully diverse songs you can hear the influence of the great British folk acts of the '60s and '70s, and his more modern proclivities as well. To hear his inventive playing at its best, check out the YouTube video for "Make It Up," the first song on the album. We caught up with Elkington when he was on tour in the Pacific Northwest last November.

I've seen pictures of the Wilco studio and it looks like they have a few guitars there.

The Wilco Loft is like guitar insanity! Jeff's been collecting for a long time, and there's so much to choose from. It would take me a week to audition all the nice acoustics they have there, so when I got to the studio I basically limited myself to guitars that were within eight feet of where I was sitting; there were probably about 12 of them. Mark Greenberg, the studio manager there, who also recorded the album, very casually had me audition some of the guitars as we were going through the songs, and we just totally clicked with a '30s Gibson L-00 that Jeff had. I was looking for a certain sound, and this particular guitar sounded in the room kind of like what I wanted. And then once it was

recorded, it transformed into *exactly* what I wanted. It ended up being the go-to guitar for almost the entire album. Only on a couple of songs are there any other guitars. I might use another if it's a doubled part.

Jeff had heard the album and knew how much I loved that guitar, and at the end of the session, he very kindly offered to sell it to me. But even at the incredibly generous price he offered, it still would have been way too much for me. I would be worried about it all the time. I wouldn't take it out of the house. The guitar would own me, instead of me owning the guitar!

So Jeff said, "If you want the road-ready version of this, you need to get a Waterloo guitar." He's been playing Waterloos for a while. He introduced me to them and I got

a great deal on a WL-14, which has been my companion ever since the record came out. It's a new guitar and it needs some miles on it, which it's getting; I got it at the beginning of the year [2017], and I've played it at least two hours a day ever since. I tell everyone I meet about it. It doesn't sound like the old 00 I recorded with, but it's responsive in the same sort of way.

The Waterloo is not modeled specifically after the old 00, but more like the off-brand wartime acoustics Gibson was making under various different names, like Kalamazoo and Kel Kroydon. It's funny—a lot of the more boutique guitar companies seem to make reissues or clones of the older vintage guitars that are so sought after, but they don't make the sort of rough-and-ready department store guitars that we associate with country blues players. And there really hasn't been anything that sounds like those old guitars up until fairly recently. You have to credit [Waterloo founder] Bill Collings with having both the resources and the inclination to do that.

Do you find that some guitars sound better in alternate tunings than in standard tuning, and vice-versa?

I do. I've found that with a lot of newer guitars—certainly for fingerstyle players—there seems to be a lot of pressure on guitar companies to make very full-frequency instruments. People talk a lot about bass response, balance between strings, and getting an almost orchestral sound out of one instrument. There's definitely a place for that, but it turns out the sort of guitar records I like aren't really made on those kinds of instruments. The records from the '60s and '70s I like so much were made on fairly thin-sounding guitars—Bert Jansch, Nick Drake; people like that. You can hear on a Nick Drake record that the strings probably have not been changed in years! Martin Carthy played an old OM, Bert Jansch played a borrowed Harmony on some of his records. They're not bass-y instruments. It's funny, what sometimes sounds good to your ear in the room—a very flattering full sound—actually records as kind of flat. But things like the old 00 and the Waterloo, which are more “shouty” in the midrange, record magically.

How much of the album is in alternate tunings, and how did you get started using them?

The entire album is in DADGAD, which of course is a very resonant tuning. There are three D's in there and they're sort of sympathetic to each other, so that balanced, full

bass tends to get a little bit exaggerated with the, in quotes, “nicer” guitars.

This whole album started out as a doodle, basically. I was playing with Jeff Tweedy and we were touring—not a huge amount, but we had a lot of time off during the day—and I borrowed a guitar from Jeff to practice. I've never been one for alternative tunings. I don't really like to shift the goalposts on myself that much, but my friend Nathan Salsburg, who I play with in a guitar duo, does that all the time, and he can seemingly move very smoothly between three or four tunings. But I've never really liked standing there on stage

retuning; even if you have multiple guitars you still have to do some adjustment there.

Anyway, since I had this time off, I started to experiment a little in my spare time, almost like learning a new instrument. I'd sit down with a guitar in DADGAD and really have no idea what was going on. But I liked the sound of it, and that kind of harp-like effect that people like Bert Jansch and Martin Carthy were able to get with that tuning. So I started dabbling, and after about six months of that I had all these little bits of music which I kind of fashioned into songs. But it was never intended to be a record. **AG**

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DICK BOAK

American Icons

Vintage Instruments hosts a special exhibition of early Martin guitars

BY BARRY WAHRHAFTIG

C.F. Martin & Company's Nazareth, Pennsylvania, factory has long been a mecca for acoustic guitarists, and earlier this winter, Vintage Instruments, in downtown Philadelphia, became a Martin annex of sorts. On December 1st and 2nd, the shop held a free exhibit of Martin guitars made between 1834 and 1870, the largest exhibition of these instruments outside of the company's in-house museum. The guitars were from the personal collections of the shop's owner (and instrument appraiser on PBS's *Antique Roadshow*), Fred Oster, and Peter Szego, co-editor of *Inventing the American Guitar: The Pre-Civil War Innovations of C.F. Martin*.

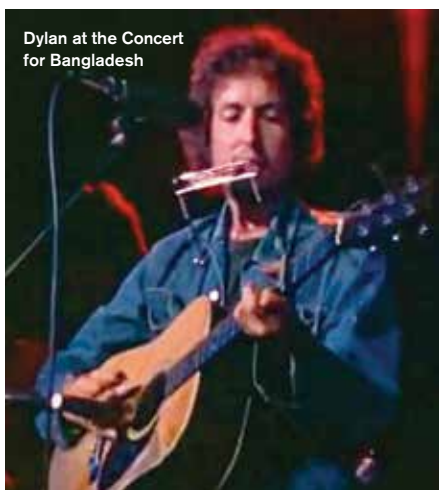
Vintage Instruments is located in a stately Aesthetic Movement/Queen Anne-style house, built in 1882—a fitting setting for three dozen 19th century instruments presented in three rooms of the shop's first floor. It was thrilling to see the guitars sitting on their stands atop long tables. A crowd of enthusiasts, collectors, and musicians—among them former Martin archivist Dick Boak—gathered around the instruments as Fred Oster looked on. “Our goal here was to show how interesting and historically important these early American guitars are,” Oster said.

It was easy to understand what Oster was talking about. A particularly significant

instrument on display, a Spanish-style Martin made around 1843, looked traditional with its large, solid headstock, but the guitar's soundboard was reinforced with the X-bracing system that presaged the development of the steel-string guitar.

Another example, a Style 2 1/2-18 built about ten years later, showed the squared-off headstock and tapered waist that would become standard features of Martin guitars—and steel-strings in general. Being so close to these ancient instruments—which C.F. Martin, Sr. no doubt had his hands on—was a near-religious experience.

AC



'THERE'S GOLD IN THEM THAR GEE-TARS'

With each passing year, it seems the auction prices for guitars once owned by famous musicians have gone up and up, easily blowing past the modest expectations of auction houses both in the USA and the UK. Case in point, a pair of auctions this past November and December.

In the first one, held November 11, 2017, a guitar that Bob Dylan had used for his acoustic mini-set at the famous all-star Concert for Bangladesh benefit organized by George Harrison in 1971—and also was played throughout Dylan's "Rolling Thunder Revue" tour in 1975–76—was sold through Heritage Auctions for the positively stratospheric price of \$396,000. A bit more backstory: In 1977, Dylan switched from playing Martins to Gibsons, so he offered the D-28 and two D-18s to guitar tech Larry Cragg. Cragg took the D-18s to Prune Music in Mill Valley, California, where they were sold on consignment for Dylan in 1977, but purchased the D-28 for himself and kept it carefully stored for the next 40 years. The price he paid for the D-28 and its hardshell case? \$500. Pretty good return on the investment.

Cragg tangentially figures into our other auction news, too. As Neil Young's guitar tech for decades, chances are at some point he probably handled every guitar that went up for sale through Julien's Auctions on December 9, 2017, as part of a massive sell-off of Young's belongings, ranging from hundreds

of pieces from his legendary Lionel model train collection to some of his classic cars to studio gear, clothing, and much more. Among the many guitars on the block were nearly a dozen acoustics, including a 1977 Martin D-19 that Young used on his *Comes a Time* and *Hawks and Doves* albums (\$43,750; highest price of the acoustics); a 1935 Martin F-7 archtop (\$25,000); a 1950 Martin 5-18 (\$16,000); several 1996 Martin D-M dreadnoughts (\$7,500–\$12,800); a beautiful black Eko E-85 (\$5,760); and three different early '80s Takamine guitars: a Sunrise EF360S (\$12,500), a 12-string (\$6,400), and a Jasmine 533 (\$3,400).

Some of the proceeds from the Neil Young auction were earmarked to go to the Bridge School in Hillsborough, California, which serves children with severe speech and physical impairments. Young's son Ben went there, and for 30 years the guitarist and Ben's mother Pegi organized star-studded acoustic benefit concerts to help support the school. Alas, 2017 was the first year since 1988 there wasn't a Bridge show.

—Blair Jackson

Announcing Tommy Emmanuel Guitar Camp, 2018 in Memphis!

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THE
BLUE
IN JAZZ

The image features a vibrant blue background with large, organic, wavy shapes in varying shades of blue. Overlaid on this background is the text "THE BLUE IN JAZZ" in a bold, sans-serif font. The word "THE" is in black and positioned at the top. "BLUE" is in a medium blue and positioned in the middle. "IN JAZZ" is in black and positioned at the bottom. The text is slightly tilted to the right.

USING THE CLASSIC 12-BAR FORM AS A GATEWAY TO BEBOP IMPROVISATION

BY SEAN MCGOWAN



In a sense, the genres of jazz and blues grew up together throughout various regions of America in the 20th century. The blues has roots in the antebellum South. Via itinerant musicians at first and later records and radio, it spread throughout the west to Texas and beyond, northeast to Memphis and the Carolinas, and due north to Chicago and Detroit during the Great Migration of African Americans out of the rural South to the industrialized cities of the North.

There is a very thin veil between early New Orleans jazz styles and blues. In fact, early jazz pioneers such as Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet worked and recorded with popular classic blues singers. Whether talking about song form, chord progressions, lyrical themes, melodic and rhythmic vocabulary, or just the general feeling, the blues is an essential ingredient to just about every American style of music, including jazz, country, rock, soul, etc.

If you listen to the jump swing of Louis Jordan, the urban West Coast blues of T-Bone Walker, the early bebop/swing style of Charlie Christian, and the western swing of Eldon Shamblin and Junior Barnard with Bob Wills and His Texas Playboys, you'll hear a lot more similarities than differences. The common thread that connects them all? The blues.

In this lesson, you'll explore comping and soloing strategies over a standard 12-bar jazz blues progression, as well as chord substitutions and variations such as the minor blues form and Charlie Parker's "Bird Blues." Once you are well acquainted with these common blues forms, you'll be ready to hit those jam sessions.



STANDARD JAZZ BLUES PROGRESSIONS

In contemporary jazz, a blues form typically means a repeating 12-bar progression—often in a horn-friendly key like F or B \flat —with standard chord changes and common substitutions. There are many different blues-based heads, or melodies, in the jazz canon: standards such as Charlie Parker’s “Au Privave” and “Billie’s Bounce,” Thelonious Monk’s “Straight, No Chaser,” and Clifford Brown’s “Sandu.”

Example 1 shows the standard chord changes for a 12-bar blues in the key of F. In the first four bars, the chords are almost identical to a traditional blues. The I chord is followed by the IV chord in the second bar, then back to the I in the third. As in a traditional blues progression, both the I and IV chords are dominant in quality. One slight variation is in bar 4: There is a ii–V move that sets up the IV7 (B \flat 7) chord in bar 5. The ii–V change is ubiquitous in jazz, and the blues progression is no exception. In this case, since you’re approaching a B \flat 7 chord, the

Cm7–F7 leading up to that measure is called a ii–V of IV (Cm7 = ii and F7 = V of B \flat 7).

A defining characteristic of the blues is the IV7 on the fifth bar (or first bar of the second phrase of the tune). In measure 6, the root of the IV chord moves up a half step to create a colorful #ivdim7 chord (Bdim7), which is followed by a return to the tonic (F7).

In bar 8, there’s another ii–V, this time approaching the iim7 (Gm7) chord in bar 9 (beginning of the last four-bar phrase). The ii–V of Gm7 is Am7–D7. Note that the Am7 chord features an E natural and the D7 features an F \sharp , neither of which are found in F minor pentatonic or blues scales.

Also notice that whenever there is dominant-to-tonic (V7–I) movement, such as in measures 4–5 and 8–9, the V7 chord can feature altered extensions to create tension and resolution. In Ex. 1, the F7 in the fourth measure features both the #9 and b9 extensions (creating some inner line movement), and the D7 in bar 8 includes a b9. Bars 9–10 include a ii–V (Gm7–C7), resolving to the tonic (F7) and ending with a quick turnaround (F7–D7–Gm7–C7). The turnaround is essential in all styles of blues, and whether via a riff, signature lick, or common chord sequence, it signifies the end of one form and turns around to the start of another.

BLUES COMPING STRATEGIES

When comping through a blues progression, you can use syncopated rhythms to create a strong swing feel. Also, many guitarists opt for a full

There are many different blues-based heads, or melodies, in the jazz canon.

chordal sound by playing voicings on the middle four strings, as in **Example 2**. This exercise is built from a Charleston rhythm in the first bar, as well as the rhythmic elements of anticipation (the B \flat 7 chord in bars 1 and 4) and delayed attack (the F7 in measure 3 and Cm7 in 4).

Also, notice the use of colorful notes: The F7 and B \flat 7 chords include ninth and 13th extensions, the Cm7 uses a ninth, and the F7 in bar 4 highlights altered-ninth extensions as it approaches the B \flat 7 chord in the following measure, creating a V7–I type of connection.

Example 3 continues through the F blues progression from bar 5, offering some suggested voicings and rhythms to play behind a soloist or even as a chord solo. Again, notice how extensions are used in the chord voicings to create color, and try to visualize the root of each chord, even though it’s not a part of the voicing. (Remember, the bassist will usually handle the root in a group setting.)

The guide tones, however, are always present. They define the sound of each chord, while the extensions create tension and resolution from altered to unaltered voicings, as in the D7alt-to-Gm7 cadence and the chordal turnaround in the last two measures. This example also shows a chromatic approach of an E7 up a half step to the tonic F7 chord.

Example 1

Example 1 shows the standard chord changes for a 12-bar blues in the key of F. The progression is as follows:

Bar 1: F9
Bar 2: B \flat 13
Bar 3: F9
Bar 4: Cm7, F7#9, F7b9
Bar 5: B \flat 7
Bar 6: Bdim7
Bar 7: F13
Bar 8: Am7, D7b9
Bar 9: Gm7
Bar 10: C7#9, C7b9
Bar 11: F7, D7#9
Bar 12: Gm7, C7#9

The diagram shows the chord voicings for each bar, with the root of the chord indicated by a number (1-7) on the bass line. The voicings are as follows:

Bar 1: F9 (8, 8, 8, 8)
Bar 2: B \flat 13 (8, 7, 6, 6)
Bar 3: F9 (8, 8, 8, 8)
Bar 4: Cm7 (8, 8, 8, 8), F7#9 (9, 8, 7, 8), F7b9 (8, 7, 7, 8)
Bar 5: B \flat 7 (6, 7, 6, 6)
Bar 6: Bdim7 (6, 8, 7, 7)
Bar 7: F13 (3, 3, 2, 1)
Bar 8: Am7 (5, 5, 4, 5), D7b9 (3, 3, 3, 3)
Bar 9: Gm7 (3, 3, 3, 3)
Bar 10: C7#9 (4, 2, 3, 2), C7b9 (2, 2, 3, 3)
Bar 11: F7 (1, 6, 2, 5), D7#9 (3, 3, 3, 3)
Bar 12: Gm7 (3, 4, 3, 2), C7#9 (3, 3, 3, 3)



Example 2

F₁₃ B_{b13} F₁₃ C_{m7} F_{7alt} B_{b9}

T 8 8 8 8 8 8
A 7 7 5 6 7 7
D 7 7 6 6 7 7
B 6 6 5 5 6 6

Example 3

B_{b9} B_{dim7} E₉ F₉ A_{m7} D_{7alt}

T 6 8 6 6 9 7
A 5 5 5 4 7 7
D 6 6 6 6 9 6
B 5 5 5 5 8 7

G_{m9} C₉ C_{7#9} F₁₃ D_{7alt} G₁₃ C_{7alt} F₁₃

T 10-10 8 9 9 6 11 10 9 8 8
A 7 7 7 8 8 7 10 9 7 7
D 8 8 8 8 8 7 10 9 8 7
B 8 8 7 7 7 6 9 8 7 6

Example 4

B_{b9} E_{b9} F₉

T 6 6 6 8 6 8
A 5 5 6 6 6 8
D 6 6 5 5 7 7
B 5 5 6 6 6 8

Example 5a

F₉ E_{7#9} E_{b9} D_{7#9} G_{m7}

T 8 8 6 6 3
A 8 7 6 5 3
D 7 6 5 4 3
B 8 7 6 5 3

Example 5b

F₁₃ G_{m7} A_{m7} A_{b7} G_{m7}

T 3 3 5 4 3
A 2 3 5 4 3
D 1 3 5 4 3
B 1 3 5 4 3

Example 6

F₁₃ A_{b13} D_{b9} G_{b13} F₁₃

T 3 6 4 4 3
A 2 5 4 3 2
D 1 4 3 2 1
B 1 4 4 2 1

ESSENTIAL LISTENING

Here's a handful of great tunes exploring an intersection of jazz and the blues:

T-Bone Walker "They Call It Stormy Monday" from *Greatest Hits*

Eldon Shamblin & Junior Barnard "Milk Cow Blues" from *Bob Wills & His Texas Playboys Basin Street Blues*

Charlie Christian "Grand Slam" from *The Genius of the Electric Guitar*

Wes Montgomery "No Blues" from *Smokin' at the Half Note*

George Benson "Billie's Bounce" from *Giblet Gravy*

Pat Martino "A Blues for Mickey-O" from *El Hombre*



You can approach any of these chords from a half step above or below, and dominant-seventh chords tend to sound the best. They provide a really nice chromatic effect that lends itself well to the sound of the blues. You can also substitute a dominant-seventh chord for the iim7 chord, in this case a G7 instead of Gm7, as shown in the penultimate measure.

There are a few common substitutions that guitarists and pianists use when comping. In measure 6 of the blues form, you can substitute the diminished-seventh chord (Bdim7) with a dominant seventh on the ♭7 of the key (E♭7). That way, you can approach the tonic (F7) quite naturally (**Example 4**).

Measures 7–8 feature additional descending and ascending chords that connect to the iim7 in bar 9, as shown in **Examples 5a–b**. Each chord in the turnaround (bars 11–12) can be substituted with a dominant-seventh chord a tritone away (**Example 6**). The original turnaround, F7–D7–G7–C7, is now replaced with F7–A♭7–D♭7–G♭7.

This device, known as a tritone substitution, works because two dominant-seventh chords a tritone apart share the same guide tones. As seen in **Example 7**, the third of one becomes the flatted seventh of the other, and vice versa. For example, the guide tones of a C7 chord are E (3) and B♭ (♭7), which, oppositely, happen to be the third (B♭) and flatted seventh (F♭/E) of a G♭7 chord. Notice also that the guide tones are a tritone apart within the chord voicing.

SOLOING STRATEGIES ON BLUES

There are a number of different ways to approach soloing over a blues. Harmonically speaking, bebop musicians tend to think vertically, outlining each individual chord and often adding substitutions. However, since it is a blues, soloists also employ pentatonic and blues scales to great effect. Combine these strategies with swing rhythms, motivic development, repetition, emotion, and so forth, and you have the recipe for a powerful blues statement in a jazz context.

Let's explore the first four measures of an F blues with a few of these different strategies. **Example 8** shows a vertical approach to playing over the chords using arpeggios and chord tones. Notice how the first bar features the ninth (G) of the F7 chord (like the F9 voicing in Ex. 1), while the fourth bar features a flatted-ninth color tone, which sets up some nice tension to be resolved in the following B♭7 chord. You can essentially use the same harmonic devices and approaches whether you are comping or soloing.

Example 9 takes the same melodic line and adds some chromatic activity, which is an

essential characteristic of bebop blues. The first two bars utilize chromaticism in the line itself; bar 1 contains a descending chromatic line working from the C down to A♭, and the following measure features a double chromatic enclosure (neighbor tones setting up the approach note from a half step above and below) within the triplet figure.

In this case, you're setting up the chord-tone F in measure 3 by playing chromatic notes above and below (G♭ and E). This type of ornamental turn is found in many styles of music; the highly chromatic nature of this approach is comfortably at home in the jazz blues.

Ex. 9 culminates in a chromatic approach to the chord: Instead of outlining the Cm7–F7–B♭7 progression, you can approach the B♭7 chord chromatically by outlining a dominant-seventh chord a half step above, resulting in a progression of Cm7–B7–B♭7. The most effective way to do this is by playing a triad or seventh-chord arpeggio on the chord of substitution.

Another device popular with guitarists is the concept of playing minor lines, arpeggios, and patterns built on the fifth of a chord. For example, over an F7 chord you can think and play C minor; over B♭7, use F minor, and so on. Generally speaking, minor-seventh arpeggios and minor-pentatonic lines sound best in this application.

You'll find examples of this approach throughout masterful blues solos by Wes Montgomery, George Benson, and Pat Martino. The first three measures of **Example 10** superimpose a Cm chord over an F7, Fm over B♭7, and Cm over F7, respectively. You can also use this concept over minor-seventh chords—the Cm7 chord in measure 4 includes a G minor arpeggio. Combine it with a chromatic approach: The following F7alt chord features an F♯ minor arpeggio, which is built on the fifth of a B7 chord—the tritone substitution of F7 and the chromatic approach to B♭7.

Of course, when playing a jazz blues, you can also play lines derived from the blues scale, as shown in **Example 11**. Even though you're using a blues scale, the harmonies are effectively outlined through an emphasis on chord tones on the strong beats of each measure—one of the hallmarks of a coherent jazz-blues solo.



This lesson is excerpted from Sean McGowan's forthcoming book *The Acoustic Jazz Outburst*, which will soon be available at store. acousticguitar.com. To see and hear these jazz-blues concepts in action, head to acousticguitar.com for a sample 36-bar solo.



Example 7

Chords: D7, A \flat 7, G7, D \flat 7, C7, G \flat 7, F7

Example 8

Chords: B \flat 7, F7, C \flat 7, F7 \flat 9, B \flat 7

Example 9

Chords: F7, B \flat 7, F7, C \flat 7, B7, B \flat 7

Example 10

Chords: F7, B \flat 7, F7, C \flat 7, F7alt, B \flat 7

Example 11

Chords: F7, B \flat 7, F7, C \flat 7, F7 \sharp 9, B \flat 7

Spirit of the West





How singing cowboys and mass marketing created the humble, hardy cowboy guitar

BY MICHAEL WRIGHT

PHOTOS COURTESY OF STEVE EVANS



Gene Autry

This article originally appeared in the January 1996 issue of Acoustic Guitar, but as the story behind this intriguing segment of guitar history never gets old, at least in the eyes of the editorial staff, we decided to reprint it for readers who might have missed it the first time around. For those interested in experiencing these instruments and learning about the current state of cowboy guitar culture, see Bill Leigh's "Exploring Cowboy Guitars in a Post-Cowboy World" sidebar on page 34. And if you're a long-time subscriber who still has the original issue in your collection, send a picture of yourself and the cover to editors.ag@stringletter.com and we'll send you something from the AG goodie bag!

Special thanks to the author, Michael Wright, and to Steve Evans of the Jacksonville Guitar Museum, for their invaluable assistance with this article.

Back in the 1950s, before the age of hyper-marketed cartoon characters, kids had to settle for heroes such as newspaper reporters who could fly and—of more interest to guitar players—cowboys who could sing. While the old Gene Autry and Roy Rogers teleplays were more primitive than those of modern superheroes, their functions were remarkably similar; they served as simple, entertaining morality plays (good guys v. bad guys) and as vehicles for marketing related products. Among the items that capitalized on warbling broadcast buckaroos were cowboy guitars, a fascinating subset of guitar history that has recently grabbed the attention of a growing number of guitar buffs.

Cowboy guitars—usually fairly humble beginner instruments—are most often associated with Gene Autry and Roy Rogers and the whole “singing cowboy” phenomenon, which

was enormously popular from the mid-'30s to the mid-'50s. However, the story is actually more complex and interesting than a simple response to box office heroes. Indeed, cowboy guitars have a venerable heritage that actually predates the singing stars of the silver screen and represents a fascinating example of the integrated marketing of popular culture.

PICKIN' COWBOYS

Of course, the association of guitars with cowboys goes back quite a long way, almost to the beginning, you might say. The rugged and rowdy cowboy at home on the range singing songs

around the campfire is a part of American mythology. Ironically, the earliest guitar-toting cowpokes urging little dogies to get along were more likely to be Mexican vaqueros than Yankees or northern Europeans in search of wide-open spaces. Nevertheless, the image is as American as apple pie.

The lithe guitar was the perfect portable instrument to accompany the winning of the West, far better than a portly piano. Indeed, when Sears Roebuck & Company produced its first full-line mail-order catalog in 1896, it offered a wide variety of guitars, built in Chicago and shipped throughout the country as it filled up with farmers and townsfolk. But these instruments are not the ones we now refer to as “cowboy guitars.” It was almost certainly Sears that invented the cowboy guitar, but not until the late 1920s.

On the surface, the appearance of the first cowboy guitar was related to cowboy music, which had become enormously popular in the late 1920s. Cowboy singers were usually men in cowboy outfits who played guitar and sang folk songs that were vaguely “western” in nature (versus East Coast Tin Pan Alley). Look a little deeper, however, and you'll discover an amazing confluence of technology and marketing behind the lowly cowboy guitar.

To understand Sears' relationship with the cowboy guitar, we must consider popular entertainment of the period. By the late '20s, Thomas A. Edison's ingenious invention, the phonograph record player, had become a fairly widespread medium in homes across America, often obtained from a mail-order catalog. And as the hardware spread, so did the need for “software.” In response, a whole recording industry sprang up, with record companies scouring the land looking for musical artists to record.

Among the many companies that got into the record game were catalog mass merchandisers such as Sears and Montgomery Ward. They sold the phonographs through the mail; it only made sense to sell the records, too. These retailers actually signed artists, whose records were then marketed through the mail-order catalogs bearing Sears or Ward house labels. Sometimes these artists recorded as themselves on the catalog labels, and sometimes they used pseudonyms (for example, Decca artist Tex Fletcher recorded for Montgomery Ward as Tack Foster).

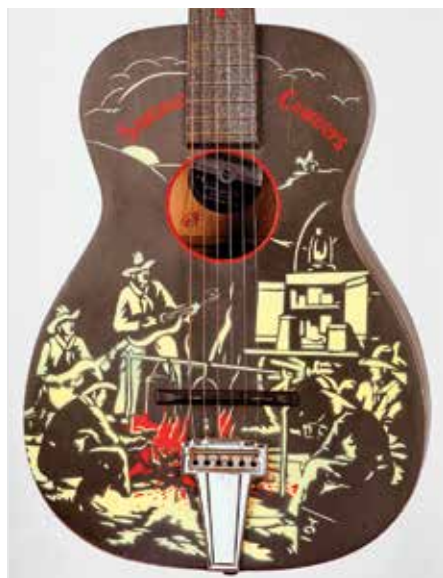
Another entertainment medium that sprang up with remarkable alacrity in the 1920s was broadcast radio. By 1926 the first commercial radio networks were beaming signals across the nation. In addition to record players, the catalog mass merchandisers did a booming business selling radios. In the case of Sears, ever in search of business synergies to increase its profitability, the success of this market led to another software decision. In order to provide its customers with



Late 1940s “Gene Autry” Melody Ranch guitar shows a cattle roundup and a cowboy on horseback swinging a lariat above his head. A reproduction of Autry's signature appears at the lower portion of the scene.

something to listen to on the radio, Sears owned and operated one of the biggest radio stations in the country, Chicago's gigantic WLS, whose call letters stood for "World's Largest Store."

Radio programming in the '20s primarily consisted of live music and drama (playing records on the air would only become common in the late '40s), creating an almost insatiable hunger—and a huge opportunity—for able musicians. Sears' WLS blanketed much of the nation's heartland with a mix of sophisticated dance bands and the increasingly popular hill-billy and cowboy (or what we would now call country and western) music. Care to guess where, once you heard the artists on the air, you could buy their records?



1940 "Singing Cowboys" scene shows five cowboys singing and playing guitars around the campfire. Made by Harmony and sold through Sears with Supertone label inside.

In this story, at least, all roads do seem to lead to Sears. There's one more piece to the puzzle. Remember that Sears had been selling guitars since the 1890s. In around 1916 it made another of its synergistic moves and purchased the Harmony guitar company to be the primary supplier of its catalog stringed instruments. Not only did Sears sell record players and the records, and sell radios and own the radio station, it made Harmony guitars. Some marketing genius put this all together in 1929 and introduced the cowboy guitar, yet another way Sears could profit from its performing stars!

THE FIRST COWBOY GUITARS

Named after a singer who accompanied himself on the guitar as he performed a repertoire of folk and western songs, and first released in 1929, the Bradley Kincaid Houn' Dog guitar

was a standard-sized (13-1/8 inch) flattop made by Harmony, which was sold bearing both the Sears Supertone and the Harmony labels. The Kincaid had a spruce top, a slotted headstock (typical of the era), and a rectangular pin bridge. The Supertone (\$9.65) had a mahogany body, while the Harmony (\$13.50) had a birch body. Both had a decal on the belly featuring a hound dog on top of a mountain and "Bradley Kincaid Houn' Dog" written in script. This progenitor of the cowboy guitar was available until around 1933. Whether the Houn' Dog sold well for Sears, or did much for Kincaid's career, is unknown. But Sears soon had a bigger fish to fry in the person of Gene Autry.

Orvon "Gene" Autry was born in Tioga, Texas, in 1907, and by the late '20s was performing with his guitar on KVOO radio in Tulsa, where he was first billed as "Oklahoma's Singing Cowboy." Autry recorded some sides for Okeh Records and caught the attention of WLS, which brought him to Chicago to do the Gene Autry Program and to perform on the immensely influential National Barn Dance show. Autry, true to form, joined Sears' stable of recording artists, and his records were available through the catalog. With WLS as a platform. Autry became a huge star.



1940 "Plainsman" guitar depicts Wild Bill Hickok on horseback in a forest of pine trees. This art was fashioned after a scene from the 1936 Gary Cooper movie *The Plainsman*.

Sears introduced its first Gene Autry guitar, the Roundup, in 1932, building on Autry's WLS success. Basically, this was a Harmony guitar very similar to the Bradley Kincaid, except for a cowboy scene and Autry's signature on the belly. The Roundup remained in the Sears catalog unchanged until 1935, when the girth was upgraded to a concert size (14 inches) and



Early 1940s "Lefty Cowboy on Horse," made by Kay and sold through Spiegel. The scene's cowboy resembles Gene Autry wearing chaps and a big cowboy hat. Note original owner's pick-shaped initials "O.S.B."

the neck increased to 14 frets clear of the body. In 1939 the Roundup grew again to grand concert size (15 inches), now with a maple body, a sunburst finish, and a tortoiseshell pickguard. Gone was the cowboy scene, replaced by a stenciled "Gene Autry" on the fingerboard. In 1940, by the way, Sears divested itself of the Harmony subsidiary, selling it to a group of Harmony executives headed by Jay Kraus, and in 1941 Sears changed the name of its guitars from Supertone to Silvertone. The Roundup went out of production in 1941.

In 1934, Gene Autry hooked up with Nat Levine of Mascot Pictures in Hollywood and made his first B-movie western, *In Old Santa Fe*. This essentially created the genre that would become known as singing cowboy movies and began a phenomenal streak of successful films that continued unabated through 1953, by which time, beginning in 1950, Autry had transferred his success to television. (He later made a name for himself in baseball as well, as owner of the California Angels.)

Seizing on Autry's new success in films, Sears immediately produced another Gene Autry guitar. Following Autry's 1934 picture *In Old Santa Fe*, in 1935 Sears introduced the Old Santa Fe guitar, an archtop with a pressed spruce top and maple body in a sunburst finish. The guitar had Autry's signature under the tailpiece and "Old Santa Fe" and a little design stenciled on the headstock. The Old Santa Fe was available for only one year.

There was one final Gene Autry guitar, which was also a movie tie-in. In 1940 Autry made the movie *Melody Ranch*, and Sears followed with the Harmony-made Melody Ranch guitar in 1941.

COWBOY GUITARS

This was another standard-sized flattop, with a spruce top and maple body with another cowboy scene on the belly. The Melody Ranch appeared in the Sears catalog until 1955.

THE SINGING COWBOYS

The singing cowboy movies pioneered by Gene Autry proved right for the times. The stock market crash of 1929 had sent the country spinning into the Great Depression of the '30s, and people needed cheap thrills to distract them. Melodramatic westerns with handsome heroes riding clever horses, bashing bandits, and pausing to strum guitars were just the ticket. For the next decade and a half, a host of musical Autry clones rode across the silver screen, including Roy Rogers, Tex Ritter, Rex Allen, Eddie Dean, and Jimmie Wakeley. These singing cowboys brought the first multimedia images of guitars to several generations of potential cowboy-guitar purchasers.

If Gene Autry had a challenger as champion of the singing cowboys, it was Roy Rogers. Rogers, who was born Leonard Franklin Slye in Duck Run, Ohio, in 1911, left the farm and headed west for Los Angeles with a guitar on his knee. There, as Dick Weston, he hooked up with other musicians and became one of the founders of the Sons of the Pioneers, a band that was featured on the popular KNX *Hollywood Barn Dance* show in 1936. The Sons of the Pioneers made their movie debut in '36 as well, appearing in two Gene Autry flicks, *The Big Show* and *The Old Corral*. In 1938, Weston changed his name to Roy Rogers and starred in his first picture, *Under Western Stars*. In 1944, for the film *The Cowboy*



1955 "Roy Rogers" guitar shows Roy playing guitar by a campfire and Trigger standing in the background. This guitar has a spruce top with maple back and sides and was made by Harmony.

and the *Señorita*, Rogers was joined by Dale Evans, who would become his wife and costar in a successful television career in the '50s (which would later lead to restaurant fame).

Rogers did not inspire his first cowboy guitar until 1954, when Sears introduced the Harmony-made Roy Rogers, a 3/4-size guitar made of birch and decorated with Rogers' signature and a cowboy picking by the campfire alongside his trusty steed. At least three cardboard (!) Roy Rogers guitars also appeared, beginning in 1957.

Relatively few cowboy guitars were actually named for film stars. The Western Rex was probably meant to accompany Rex Allen, either officially or by implication. The Lone Ranger was obviously based on the popular radio and movie series, and the Buck Jones was named after one of the first great western stars, but neither the Lone Ranger nor Buck Jones ever picked up a guitar and sang. Some other guitars were named for musicians, but most had generic names such as Singing Cowboys, Black Stallion, Pioneer Days, Lariat, and Plainsman. Some simply had cowboy motifs and no known model names.

GIBSON IN THE SADDLE

Most cowboy guitars were targeted at the beginner market and were made by large mass manufacturers, including Harmony, Kay, and Regal in Chicago, and United in Jersey City. However, even stately Gibson entered the cowboy guitar showdown—briefly and tangentially—with two signature models, the Carson Robison and the Ray Whitley, both of which were sold through Montgomery Ward.

Unfortunately, little is remembered of Carson Robison these days, except that he was a popular singer, guitarist, and composer who broke into radio broadcasting in 1924. Between 1929 and '30 Robison recorded eight sides for Decca, including a duet with Frank Luther, another early pioneer minstrel, of "When It's Springtime in the Rockies." By the '50s Robison was performing with a backup group as Carson Robison & His Pleasant Valley Boys, in full cowboy regalia. He was apparently held in high regard by pickers of the time.

Gibson's Carson Robison guitar was introduced by Montgomery Ward (carrying the Ward brand name) in 1935. It was basically shaped like a Gibson L-50, with a spruce top, a 14-inch mahogany body, and "Carson Robison" painted on the headstock. The same guitar was also marketed as the Kalamazoo KG-11 and the Cromwell G-1. In 1936 the body styling was changed to the L-0 profile (which can also be seen in the Kalamazoo KG-14 and the Cromwell G-2). In 1937 the guitar was renamed the Recording King Model K and became available in a 12-fret Hawaiian version.

In 1939 the body was enlarged to 16 inches, but by 1940 the Gibson Carson Robison had bit the dust. In 1941 Montgomery Ward reintroduced the Carson Robison model—now made by Kay—which lasted until 1942.



1940 "Buck Jones" guitar shows Buck on his horse, Silver, with an inscription reading "Good Luck, Buck Jones & Silver." This guitar was made by Regal and sold through Montgomery Ward.

Ray Whitley is one of those peripheral characters in the singing cowboy story who's probably best remembered today because of the Gibson guitar bearing his name. He was another cowboy crooner who began recording sides for



1937 "Lone Ranger" guitar shows the Lone Ranger riding Silver, who is reared up on hind legs, and Tonto riding his horse, Scout. In the distance is a steam engine train silhouetted by the moon.

Decca in 1935 with a small combo, and returned to the studio in 1936 with Ray Whitley's Range Ramblers. He went back to Decca studios again in '38 as Ray Whitley and His Six Bar Cowboys and recorded "The Cowboy and the Lady" (from the movie of the same name) and his most enduring cultural contribution, "Back in the Saddle Again," the song that would become Gene Autry's signature. In the late '40s, Whitley became Jimmie Wakeley's sidekick in flicks such as *West of the Alamo* (1946), *Partners of the Sunset* (1948), and *Gun Law Justice* (1949).



1941 "Red Foley" guitar made by Richter, shows a cowboy on horseback standing by a small waterfall with trees and mountains in the background. Inscription reads "Smooth Trailin' Red Foley."

Gibson's Ray Whitley guitar, also sold by Montgomery Ward, was a dreadnought introduced in 1939. It was very similar to a Gibson Advanced Jumbo, with a rosewood body. A second Ray Whitley was also introduced in '39, with a mahogany body very similar to that of a Gibson J-55. Both models were discontinued a year later.

HAPPY TRAILS

There were many versions of the cowboy guitar over the years. In one form or another, cowboy guitars were sold through the 1950s. At one point in the mid-'50s several cardboard guitars were marketed, including the Roy Rogers model, plus a Davy Crockett guitar and one generic model simply called the Range Rhythm. Emenee also waded in toward the end of the '50s with a plastic Western Folk model, and as late as 1965 Mario Maccaferri's Maestro company was still selling the No. 775 Western Guitar, which featured singing cowboys, bucking broncos, boots,

and saddles on its top. But cowboy guitars were hardly more than toys by this time, a far cry from the modest but real instruments sold via catalog in the '30s and '40s.

By the end of the 1950s, singing cowboys were replaced by television cowboys, as *Maverick*, *Gunsmoke*, *Bonanza*, *The Rifleman*, *Have Gun Will Travel*, and many other westerns drove the simple naiveté of Gene Autry and Roy Rogers off

into the sunset singing "Happy trails to you." With their departure went the market for cowboy guitars. And hovering just over the horizon was a new musical style that threatened to shake, rattle, and roll things up and move kids—and mass marketers—in an entirely new direction. As a sign of things to come, in 1954, the Sears catalog started to sell solid-body electric guitars, but that's another story . . . **AG**

THE COWBOY GUITAR CATALOG

Given their humble origins, a comprehensive accounting of cowboy guitars is probably impossible. But with help from Mike Newton (a guitar enthusiast and invaluable resource in researching this subject) and Steve Evans (of the Jacksonville Guitar Center in Jacksonville, Arkansas), I have assembled a list of most of the cowboy guitars produced between 1929 and 1960. Here, in chronological order, are the principal cowboy guitars, followed by the manufacturer and brand names.

—Michael Wright

Kincaid Houn' Dog, 1929–33, Harmony. Supertone (Sears) and Harmony brands.

Roundup (Gene Autry signature), 1932–41, Harmony. Supertone and Silvertone brands (Sears).

Carson Robison, 1935–40, Gibson. Ward and Recording King brands (Montgomery Ward).

Old Santa Fe (Gene Autry signature), 1935–36, Harmony. Supertone brand (Sears).

Lone Ranger, 1936–41, Harmony. Supertone brand (Sears).

Rodeo, 1937–38, Regal. Montgomery Ward brand.

Home on the Range, 1938–39, Regal. Montgomery Ward brand.

Plainsman, 1938–43, Kay. Montgomery Ward brand.

Singing Cowboys, 1938–'60s, Harmony. Silvertone (Sears) and Harmony brands.

Ray Whitley, 1939–40, Gibson. Recording King brand (Montgomery Ward).

Buck Jones, 1940–44, Regal. Montgomery Ward brand.

Carson Robison, 1940–41, Kay. Montgomery Ward brand.

Red Foley Smooth Trailin', c. 1940, Kay.

Del Oro model no. CJ9000, 1941. Kay.

Louise Massey, 1941–42, Kay. Montgomery Ward brand.

Melody Ranch, 1941–55, Harmony. Silvertone brand (Sears).

Red Foley, 1941–43, Regal. Montgomery Ward brand.

Regal #502, late '40s–'50s, Regal.

Regal #520, late '40s–'50s, Regal.

Lone Ranger, 1950, Harmony. Montgomery Ward brand.

Serenader, '50s–'57, United. Bugeleisen and Jacobson brand.

Lariat, '50s–'59, Harmony. Montgomery Ward brand.

Roy Rogers, 1954–58, Harmony. Sears brand.

Black Stallion, 1950s, Harmony.

Jerry the Yodeling Cowboy, 1950s, Regal.

Pioneer Days, 1950s, Harmony.

Rancher, 1950s, United.

Texan, 1950s.

Vaquero, 1950s, Kay.

Western Rex, 1950s, Harmony.

Roy Rogers (cardboard), 1957–74, three different scenes.

Davy Crockett (cardboard), mid-'50s.

Range Rhythm (cardboard), mid-'50s, at least three different scenes.

Emenee Western Folk (plastic), late '50s–'60s.

Maestro No. 775 Western Guitar (plastic), late '50s–'60s.

MODELS WITH NO NAME

"Bunkhouse orchestra scene" 1950s, Kay.

"Corral scene" 1950s, Regal.

"Cowboy scene" 1950s, United. Buckeye brand.

"Cowboy scene" 1950s, stamped "Made in Canada."



Cowboy-guitar collector and expert Steve Evans

COURTESY OF STEVE EVANS

BACK IN THE SADDLE AGAIN

Exploring cowboy guitars in a post-cowboy world BY BILL LEIGH

If you're riding the dusty trail toward vintage cowboy guitars, you won't do better than the Jacksonville Guitar Center, a privately owned guitar store about 20 miles outside of Little Rock, Arkansas, and two hours west of Memphis, Tennessee. This local guitar shop is also home to the Jacksonville Guitar Museum (www.jacksonvilleguitarmuseum.com), a project of store owner and cowboy guitar enthusiast Steve Evans. Among vintage Fenders, Martins, and Gibsons, Evans has collected over 150 cowboy guitars from the 1930s to the 1950s, along with a few hundred plastic toy guitars from the era. Evans co-authored the 2002 book *Cowboy Guitars* (Centerstream Publishing/Hal Leonard), a detailed model-by-model catalog of the vintage instruments with a look at some treasure troves of notable collectors. He started acquiring cowboy guitars himself just a few years after opening his shop in 1975 at age 18. "I used to go to the Dallas Guitar Show and hand out business cards that said, 'I buy cowboy guitars,'" he says of his early years. "I wrote an article or two and became known, and people started sending them to me."

When it comes to corralling cowboy guitars today, Evans advises, "You wouldn't go to guitar shows, you'd just go on eBay." Indeed, with the generation of young buckaroos who looked up to

those guitar-slinging cowpokes now riding off into the sunset, their children and grandchildren are discovering the instruments in their attics and basements, and posting them for sale online. In fact, says Evans, it's prime time to find authentic vintage cowboy guitars on sites like eBay.com and Reverb.com. "I used to pay \$275 for them at guitar shows—that was the going price. Now you can get them for as little as \$150." Search eBay

'If I were going to have just one cowboy guitar, I'd want the Gene Autry'

STEVE EVANS

for "Gene Autry Guitar," and you'll likely find, among plastic 1950s Emenee toy guitars, a selection of wooden 1940s Melody Ranch guitars for around \$200 or \$300, or often much less. Search "cowboy guitar" on Reverb.com and you'll get a mixture of vintage instruments, both in playable and unplayable condition, as well as newer limited edition cowboy guitars from the last 20 years.

"When you find them, they're not going to be playable unless someone's done work on them," notes Evans. "They'll have cracks, the string

action will be too high, and the seams might be coming apart. They're fine for hanging on the wall. I leave the strings loose to keep the tension low. If you want to have a luthier fix up a guitar, it might cost you more than its worth. For example you might spend \$150 on a guitar and \$250 or more getting it into playing condition."

One contemporary artist who has done just that is Patterson Hood of Drive By Truckers. He can often be seen playing an early 1940s Gene Autry Melody Ranch guitar, though more work has been done on it than simply replacing its original rope strap with something more comfortable. "I bought it from Scott Baxendale of Baxendale Guitars in Athens, Georgia," explains Hood. "He does what he calls Harmony Conversions, where he takes old Harmony, Kay, and Silvertone guitars and basically makes new guitars out of them using as many of the original parts as possible. Often the originals have warped necks and bad tuners, but he fixes all of that. He re-braces them and puts on new hardware, and sometimes electronics, but tries to make them as true to the original look as possible. He's a master luthier, and Mike Cooley and I have several of his guitars, both new and conversions." Hood's Gene Autry Melody Ranch has the solid spruce top of the early models. It was fitted

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with a Fishman Matrix Infinity acoustic pickup with the controls removed; live, he blends an amp signal with a DI. He wrote most of Drive By Truckers' 2016 album *American Band* on it, playing it miked in the studio and through a Fender Deluxe Reverb amp.

Current and recent production models of cowboy guitars are rare, but the Old West spirit remains, especially at C.F. Martin & Co. From 2000 to 2006, Martin released five limited "Cowboy X" models, which featured the artwork of noted counter-culture illustrator Robert Armstrong, who's also an accomplished musician as a member of R. Crumb and His Cheap Suit Serenaders. The first four Cowboy X models ranged in price from \$999 to \$1,199. They were 000-sized and made in the USA, with bodies made of a high-pressure laminate of wood and synthetic resin. Armstrong incorporated the image of company chairman and CEO C.F. "Chris" Martin IV, great-great-great grandson of the company's founder, in the artwork on the guitars. He can be seen as a generous chuckwagon cook in one illustration, busting a bronco in another, and with a "CFM" branding iron on another. The final Cowboy X guitar from 2006, a smaller 0-size made in Mexico and offered at \$599, features a Western sunset scene of Chris Martin serenading his wife and daughter. More recently, the company released Limited Edition Cowboy models in 2015 and 2016, both featuring the artwork of noted western painter William Matthews. The LE-Cowboy-2015 and LE-Cowboy-2016 were offered at \$3,999 and \$4,999 respectively. Examples of both the Cowboy X and Limited Edition models can be seen on eBay and Reverb.com. Martin currently has in the works another instrument



The 2000–2006 Martin Cowboy models feature illustrations by Robert Armstrong, such as this Cowboy X guitar from 2000.

featuring Matthews' artwork, which they expect will debut later in 2018.

Other guitar makers have kept their spurs in the game as well. In the early 2000s Collings Guitars of Austin, Texas, offered the C10 Cowboy, a Limited Edition series of the company's narrow-waisted, small-upper-bout instruments with rope purfling and a painted image of a singing cowboy with coyotes howling along. Waterloo Guitars, a vintage-inspired brand from Collings, offers an optional hand-painted Southwest scene on its WL-K, a smaller instrument inspired by Kel Kroydon instruments from the 1930s. In late 2005, Recording King, the brand that started as Montgomery Ward's house label in the 1930s, debuted its Western Collectible Guitar Series, with instruments designed by cowboy guitar designer Greg Rich, who merits his own chapter in the *Cowboy Guitars* book. Designs included "Rodeo Sweethearts" and "Toonstone, AZ," and each instrument came with a *Songs of the Wild West* songbook. In 2007, Gretsch offered the limited edition Americana Series of four inexpensive collectible cowboy guitars: the "Wild West Sweethearts," "Sundown Serenade," "Showdown," and "Way Out West." The boxes they came in were almost as fun as the guitars themselves, with messages like "AMAZE YOUR FRIENDS!" and "COLLECT ALL FOUR!" and a guitar-focused cartoon on the back reminiscent of the old comic-book bodybuilding ads where a bully kicks sand in the face of a skinny kid at the beach. One Reverb.com listing offered the Gretsch Americana Series at \$200 each or \$599 for the set of four. Early last year, Gretsch

created a custom red finish on the "Way Out West" guitar for country singer-songwriter Marty Stuart, who released the album *Way Out West* in March 2017.

Conceptually, deluxe cowboy collectibles may be far from the inexpensive toy and beginner instruments that were popular in the heyday of Roy Rogers and Gene Autry, but the practice of building guitars in that tradition isn't completely extinct. Boston-area toy manufacturer Schylling, which prides itself on "intriguing refreshes of . . . toys from the past," offers a \$25 wooden guitar with a scene of



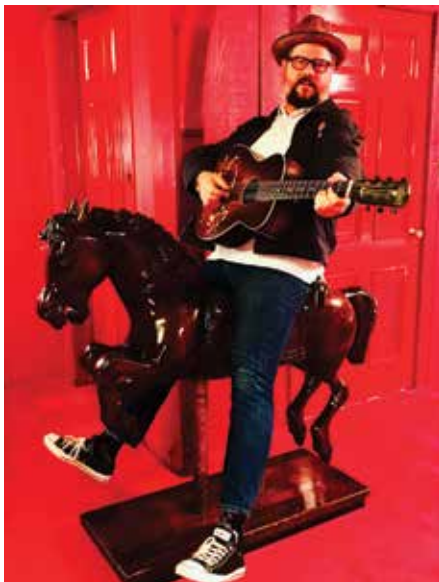
The 2007 limited edition Gretsch Americana Series offered a modern take on the inexpensive cowboy guitars of yesteryear.

cowboys around the fire stenciled onto the top. And although it's not quite a cowboy theme, Córdoba Guitars is carrying on the kid-focused guitar marketing tradition with its series of small guitars with laser-etched designs tied to the recent Disney/Pixar film *Coco*.

As for vintage instruments, Steve Evans suggests, "If you're going to get into collecting, you might as well collect the fiberboard guitars that aren't as valuable or the plastic toy guitars with cowboy images, but they just aren't nearly as

It's prime time to find authentic vintage cowboy guitars.

cool as the wood ones. However, if I were going to have just one cowboy guitar, I'd want the Gene Autry. It's not the rarest, because they made them for so many years, but he's the original singing cowboy that started this craze. It's the most common, and you'll probably get a pretty good deal on it." **AC**



Patterson Hood with his Scott Baxendale-refurbished Gene Autry Melody Ranch guitar.



GUILD USA
D-55
DREADNOUGHT
SN: C171600

MARTIN
D-28 (2017)
DREADNOUGHT
LEFT-HANDED
SN: 212843

MARTIN
HD-28
DREADNOUGHT
SN: 212651

GIBSON
LIMITED EDITION
F-5G CUSTOM
MANDOLIN
SN: 71129011

OVATION USA
ADAMAS
GCF SERIES 1198-GCF
SHALLOW CARBON
FIBER/GRAPHITE
ACOUSTIC-ELECTRIC
SN: 17101102

TAYLOR
LIMITED EDITION
914CE LTD
COCOBOLO
GRAND AUDITORIUM
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BY BOB DOERSCHUK
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Three Chet Atkins protégés meet
in Nashville to discuss the legendary
guitarist's influence and legacy



Left to right:
John Knowles, Steve Wariner,
and Tommy Emmanuel

The late Chet Atkins was many things: A self-taught guitar virtuoso and multi-instrumentalist. A technical revolutionary, who built on Merle Travis' fingerstyle approach to reach a level of sophistication previously accessible only to classical guitarists.

As a record label executive and producer, Atkins was the prime mover in transforming Nashville into a music industry mecca. He was also the founder of the most exclusive guitarist club in the world. The only way in was to be anointed by Atkins himself. Just four got the nod during his lifetime, three of whom survive to this day.

Tommy Emmanuel, John Knowles, and Steve Wariner share the distinction of being Certified Guitar Players (CGPs), along with the late Jerry Reed and Atkins' longtime guitar partner Paul Yandell, who was invited into the group by Atkins' daughter Merle after her father's death in 2001.

Their bona fides are many and varied: In recognition of his musical accomplishments, Emmanuel has been named both a member of the Order of Australia and an official Kentucky Colonel. Knowles gave up his career as a physicist to pursue music, win a Grammy, and inspire guitarists with his *FingerStyle Quarterly*. Wariner is a triple-threat whose instrumental prowess mirrors his accomplishments as a songwriter and CMA Award-winning singer with more than a dozen No. 1 hits to his name. Pages more can be written about each of their achievements.

All three guitarists recorded and performed with Atkins and parlayed what they learned from the master guitarist into their own unique styles. The one thing they hadn't ever done was get together as CGP honorees to discuss Atkins—not until the day they gathered at Nashville's Gruhn Guitars for a few hours of picking and reminiscing about their mentor and friend.

What does Chet Atkins mean to you?

Emmanuel: He was the name on everyone's lips when I was a kid. Of course, when I grew up and got to know him, I realized that he was just like the rest of us, in that his love for playing was the most important thing to him. But there were so many other things. He was such a vast dimension of a person. He had a great ear for songs. He had a great way of production. He understood sound. And if you think back on how in-tune he was on these records—and there were no digital tuners in those days—he must have had an amazing ear as well.

Wariner: What he did was to start with awesome singers and performers. The concept starts there, with incredible talent. He had an ear for that, didn't he? My dad was a wonderful teacher. I remember when I was really young he'd play me



'You stole Chet's ideas without stealing the licks'

JOHN KNOWLES

a Jim Reeves record and say, "Chet produced that." He'd play a Don Gibson record: "Chet produced that." Everything was connected to Chet. I can't even imagine my world without him.

How did you begin investigating Chet's work?

Knowles: I remember getting that record *FingerStyle Guitar*. I picked out "The Glow Worm" because it was in the key of A and it didn't have a lot of chords. For a long time I just played the bass part. Then I was like, "The melody is up here [high on the neck], but the chords are down here [toward the bottom]. So I started having to really extend my knowledge of the fingerboard. I knew what he was doing. But I just couldn't locate everything. Eventually I got to where I could kind of find my way around and then I'd make up the rest, which I realize now is the way to do it.

Emmanuel: I wasn't aware that Chet was playing with a thumb pick. All I knew was that he was playing everything at once. Of course I didn't know how he was doing that, because we had no TV—not that there were any programs. So I worked out how to go like that [plays the boom-chuck groove] with this [holds up a flat pick]. Then I worked out [picks melody with two fingers over the boom-chuck]. And I'd do [plays Elizabeth Cotten's "Freight Train"] and so forth. That's how I started playing fingerstyle. I had the idea and I was starting to work out tunes. But then in '64 his album *The Best of Chet Atkins* came out, where he's playing the green Gretsch on the cover. And there he was, with a thumb pick on! I had one of those moments . . . [slaps his palm against his forehead as Knowles and Wariner laugh]. It was like I opened the gate and the horse bolted in. I'd been tethered by this thing

[holds up a flat pick]. So I got a thumb pick and I was off, I'm telling you!

One characteristic of Chet's technique is that he seemed to exert no effort at all, as if he were almost playing in his sleep.

Emmanuel: Chet was smart because he was always looking for the best way to play something, the way that required the least amount of effort and moving around. And he always came up with it. If you look at some of his fingering, it's like, "How the hell did he come up with that?"

Wariner: He was searching. He looked all over the place until he found the easiest way.

Emmanuel: If it wasn't natural, he wouldn't do it. If he saw someone play and the music wasn't just flowing out of him, he knew that was someone who didn't yet know what they were doing. The first I saw Chet on TV, my mother turned to me and said, "He doesn't look like he's doing very much." [laughter]

Wariner: And Roy Clark's doing this [slides his left hand rapidly up and down an imaginary guitar neck]. [laughter]

Emmanuel: Well, Roy Clark was an entertainer, too.

Wariner: Exactly.

Knowles: I didn't see Chet for a long time on TV or anything, so I was trying to learn to play that stuff until one day, when I was listening to the record, I thought, "Oh, no. I'm so not doing this right." It just felt like alligator wrestling to me. It couldn't be this hard for it to sound like that. So I started listening to the sounds he was making [while moving along the strings]. If he saw me play something and I was doing it the hard way, he'd say, "That's too much work. Look at this." And he'd show me a better fingering.

Wariner: He said to me once, "Son, you're killing yourself! You're working yourself to death!" [laughter]

Emmanuel: One thing I learned from Chet about playing melody was to play the harmony first. [He illustrates, with soft grace notes preceding each note of the melody.] If you go [plays the same harmonized melody straight, without grace notes], you're now playing mariachi guitar. But if you play it like Chet, you sound like the Everly Brothers.

Knowles: He did another one like that. He would play a three-note chord with the thumb, index,



and middle on his right hand. But he'd play the index finger early so it was kind of like a singer with two harmony parts, one above and one below. Most people would play the thumb early.

Knowles: I'd worked out how to play "Send in the Clowns" like on the Judy Collins record *Judith*. I showed him and he said, "Well, that's coming along. Do you know the words?" I said, "Not all of them." And he said, "I didn't think so." That was his way of saying that the words are where the melody and the phrasing and the breathing come together.

Wariner: He knew every lyric to every song!

Knowles: He said, "You've got to remember: The audience knows the words. They're singing along with you inside. If you do the words wrong, it throws them."

Wariner: John, I came into Chet's office one day. The blue box [recorder] was sitting and he was like this [*bent to one side, guitar in hand*], making a tape for Garrison Keillor. He goes, "Garrison, Steve Wariner just walked in. Steve, grab that bass. Let's play something for Garrison." He named a song that I had no idea what it was. And when we got finished, he jumped my ass! He goes, "I can't believe you screwed up that chorus!" I said, "Chet, I'm sorry I don't know a song that was written in 1929!" He just thought that you should know every song that *he* knew.

Knowles: That's how he auditioned people. He just jumped in and said, "Come on, let's go."

Wariner: The first thing I ever did with Chet was right before he signed me to a recording contract. He said, "I want to give you a reel-to-reel tape of some songs. Learn about three of them." They were outtakes that he produced for Nat Stuckey and some other RCA artists. After I learned these songs, he brought me into Studio B. Looking back now, I realize that he was testing my voice on tape. So I sang these songs. Then he said, "Paul Yandell told me that you play guitar." I said, "Yes, sir." Then he said, "I hear you play a lot of my stuff. Play me one of my songs." And I was like, oh, my God! I came here to be a singer. [*laughter*] To your point, John, that was my acid test.

Knowles: I was recording some solo stuff in his basement. I went for the center fret and got the eighth one. I just stopped. He came back on the talkback and he was just laughing. I said, "What?" He said, "Somebody else's mistakes are always funny." [*laughter*]

There is one absent colleague in the CGP community—Jerry Reed.

Wariner: And Paul Yandell.

Emmanuel: He was the last one.

Wariner: He did kind of recuse himself.

Emmanuel: It was Paul who told Chet he should give the CGP to me.

Wariner: Probably in my case, too. Paul deserves a lot of credit.

What do you hear in Jerry's music that shows both those Chet Atkins roots and his journey beyond them toward his own unique style?

Emmanuel: I definitely hear early Chet in his playing. He could actually emulate Chet better than any of us. He could emulate Travis really well, too. But Jerry Reed was trying to be like Ray Charles. That's what set him apart in his playing. He came from a whole different perspective. He eventually evolved into his own unique style, which was based on piano licks.

Wariner: And you've got to remember that Jerry was a session guy. Then Chet started telling him, "You need to make your own records." Many times I'd brag on Jerry's guitar playing and he'd say, "Hey, I'm a songwriter, man." Or I'd brag on his writing and he'd say, "Man, I'm a guitar player." [*laughter*]

Emmanuel: I did something to Jerry that I did to Chet as well, which was to get them to play. The first thing they'd say was, "I've stopped playing."



'Everything was connected to Chet. I can't even imagine my world without him.'

STEVE WARINER

CHET DO WE APPRECIATE

Since 1985, the Chet Atkins Appreciation Society has hosted its annual convention in Nashville. The first one drew around 70 attendees, including Atkins himself. Last year a few more than 1,000 checked in at the Music City Sheraton Hotel for the four-day festivities. They came from around the world and just down the road, guitar cases in hand. They roamed from workshop to workshop, took seats in the main auditorium to enjoy the world's top fingerpickers in concert, or sprawled on floors or in the main lobby, playing together and trading technical tips.

In the lobby, Mark Pritcher stood next to the registration table, surrounded as usual by well-wishers. Most of the year he works as a family practice physician in Knoxville. But at the convention, he's a hero of sorts, the one person other than Atkins who made all of this happen. He and Jim Ferron founded the Society in 1983; since Ferron's retirement in the early 1990s, Pritcher has piloted this ship as its president.

"Chet was of course a guitar genius," he says during a break in the action. "But his legacy is about so many things, not just music. He knew how to interact with everyone he met. He saw no distinction between the president of RCA or some guy who would shine his shoes. If he taught me anything, he taught me to be that way, too."

Fingerstyle virtuoso Pat Kirtley concurs. "I remember a few years ago walking down this hallway late at night," he says. "I turned to my right and there were 15 teenagers, not causing trouble but playing guitar for each other. I don't know who they were or where they came from. All I knew is that they had found a place where they felt completely accepted. That night I learned that this convention had accomplished something."

Forrest Smith, 34, a self-described amateur guitarist attending his second convention, can tell you more about that. "I played a little bit for 20 years but I wasn't serious about it. Coming here has inspired me to pick it up again. A lot of that is due to the community here, which is everyone from Tommy Emmanuel down to me. It's inspiring to learn a song in this style and have other people say, 'That's great! Try this.' I've made some great friends by being here—and it's given the guitar back to me."

So you'd play something of theirs in front of them . . . and you'd do it wrong. [laughter] And Jerry would be like, "OK, let me show you how to do it." And once he'd play, I saw the experience in his hands. I saw a lifetime of work in two bars.

Wariner: I didn't know Jerry that well, but after Chet passed away, the night before his service, Jerry called me out of the blue. And we talked . . . Well, *he* talked for 45 minutes about Chet. I'd give anything if I'd been able to record it. He just poured his soul out to me about Chet. We got to be really close after that.

Like Jerry, each of you built an original approach to guitar on a foundation laid for you by Chet and his work.

Emmanuel: Well, when I was young I was totally into singers and songwriters—Stevie Wonder, James Taylor, Neil Diamond. It turned out they influenced a lot of my songs. But I could also work with this technique I had on guitar. For instance, I wrote a tune called "Son of a Gun" with a bridge that Travis or Chet would never have written—and yet it's based on their style [plays "Son of a Gun"].

Knowles: One more thing about learning from Chet but not sounding just like him. For me, there are two things. The first is, when I studied classical guitar for about four years, I had that

same technique but I wasn't playing with a thumb pick and I was changing the way my left hand worked. I met Chet right after I'd learned that. So I had Chet history, but nylon strings and more of a classical touch, which meant that we could work together without me feeling like I was a clone of his. The other thing is, when I would analyze his songs, it wasn't just chord names. When a new idea or a new key came in [to one of Atkins' songs], I would use them to compose things. You stole Chet's ideas without stealing the licks.

Wariner: Early on, when I was making singing records, Chet would say to me, "You need to find your own path. Don't copy anybody." A couple of my earlier records, even when Chet was producing me, sounded kind of Glen Campbell-ish, which was awesome. But Chet would say, "Be Steve Wariner. Don't copy me or Glen or anybody." That was huge because I was trying to be somebody else. I mean, there's already one Chet Atkins! Why do a half-assed version of him?

Emmanuel: Particularly to young people, I always say that I believe it's nature's way that we all start out emulating somebody. That's true in any profession. Someone lights a fire in you. As an actor, Elvis Presley wanted to be like James Dean. Everybody wanted to be like Marlon Brando. So they learned. We didn't



'I wasn't aware that Chet was playing with a thumb pick. All I knew was that he was playing everything at once!'

TOMMY EMMANUEL

want to be Chet Atkins but we couldn't help but try to play what we were hearing because we loved it so much.

AG

For more info on the Chet Atkins Society, visit chetsociety.com.

Example 1

Example 2

Example 3

SLEIGHT OF HANDS

In their time with Chet Atkins, Tommy Emmanuel, John Knowles, and Steve Wariner learned volumes from the master guitarist, much having to do with subtleties of fretting and picking technique. As Knowles demonstrates in Example 1, borrowed from Atkins' tune "Happy Again," fretting-finger economy makes for smooth, singing lines. Instead of the more conventional choice of sliding the dyads in a

parallel manner along strings 1 and 3, Knowles stays in seventh position, with his first and third fingers anchored on strings 2 and 3, respectively, and his fourth finger sliding between frets 10 and 9 on string 1.

When playing phrases with dyads, guitarists tend to play all the notes with equal weight, but as Emmanuel shows in Example 2, from Atkins he learned to do a series of double-stops with downward rakes, emphasizing the notes in the lower voice, a nuanced effect that recalls

the Everly Brothers' vocal harmonies.

Knowles shows a trickier variation on this idea in Example 3. Atkins sometimes surrounded melodies with upper and lower harmonies, resulting in three-note block chords. To pull this off, Knowles picks the middle note of each chord first, with subtle emphasis, then quickly articulates the lower and higher members with his thumb and ring finger, respectively. This results in a beautiful, choir-like effect befitting of a CGP.

—Adam Perlmutter



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Chet Atkins

Windy and Warm

Tackling an essential CGP piece

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

After Chet Atkins first recorded John D. Loudermilk's "Windy and Warm" in the spring of 1961, the guitarist made this bouncy instrumental one of his signature tunes. Bluegrass legend Doc Watson followed suit, and CGPs John Knowles and Tommy Emmanuel, among other distinguished players, also added it to their repertoires.

The transcription here is based on Atkins' best-known version, from his 1962 album *Down Home*. Atkins recorded it on an electric guitar with a capo at the third fret, but he often played it on an acoustic nylon-string without a

capo. It will sound just as good whether you play it on, say, a dreadnought or a hollow-body electric—with or without the capo.

Taken at a moderate tempo, "Windy and Warm" shouldn't be overly difficult to learn—especially if you're already familiar with Travis picking. (To brush up on the basics of this approach, see Jamie Stillway's lesson at AcousticGuitar.com.) Atkins played the downstemmed bass notes on strings 6–4 with a thumbpick and the upper-string melody notes with his fingers, but you could do the piece fingerstyle or even with hybrid picking (pick and

fingers). Whatever picking technique you use, palm-mute the bass strings throughout—simulating the thumping sound of an upright bass.

Atkins always used an economy of motion, and both the bass line and the melody are based on smoothly adding or removing fingers to and from standard chord shapes. If the bends in bars 6 and 9–10 prove tricky, just omit them and slide from the third-fret D to the fourth-fret E♭. This will create a similarly bluesy effect. After you've learned "Windy and Warm" like Chet Atkins played it, try coming up with your own arrangement of this instrumental classic. **AC**



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Capo III

Intro

Moderately

Am B \flat A A \flat G G \flat F E

A

Am Riff A Em Am

10 Em End Riff A 1 Am 2 Am B

15

C To Coda

Guitar plays Riff A
(first 6 bars)

20 F7 E7 Em Am

Cont. on p. 44

WINDY AND WARM

Cont. from p. 43

30 **G7** **C9** **F**

35 **Dm** **E** **D** *Guitar plays Riff A* **Am**

46 **A**

50 **E7** **E7#9**

54 **A7** **D9**

58 **A** **E** *D.S. al Coda (take 2nd ending)*

60 **Am** **Em** **Am** **Coda**

The musical score is written for guitar and bass. The guitar staff (top) contains the melody and chord changes, while the bass staff (bottom) provides the harmonic accompaniment with fingerings. The score is divided into systems, with measure numbers 30, 35, 46, 50, 54, 58, and 60 marking the beginning of new sections. Chords are indicated above the guitar staff: G7, C9, F, Dm, E, D, Am, A, E7, E7#9, A7, D9, A, E, Am, Em, and Am. A section labeled 'Guitar plays Riff A' is indicated between measures 40 and 45. The score concludes with a Coda section starting at measure 60. Fingerings are provided for all notes and chords, including complex sequences like triplets and sixteenth-note runs.



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Tommy Emmanuel

Guitar Boogie

Tommy Emmanuel shreds on a classic guitar instrumental

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

Rock-guitar solos are most commonly associated with the electric guitar, but one of the earliest examples, if not the first—Arthur Smith's 1945 recording of his signature tune "Guitar Boogie" (a.k.a. "Guitar Boogie Shuffle")—was recorded on a steel-string. This 12-bar blues, alternating between piano-inspired boogie-woogie patterns and nimble single-note lines, set the template for rock 'n' roll, and for the guitar as a hot soloing instrument.

CGP Tommy Emmanuel has recorded "Guitar Boogie" several times and made it a

staple of his set list. This transcription is based on an informal but remarkable performance posted on Emmanuel's YouTube page, on which the guitarist cuts loose on a shiny Gibson J-45, with chorus after chorus of cool ideas.

Due to space restrictions, seven choruses (84 bars) of the solo aren't shown in notation, but the music here gives you a good sampling of the different approaches Emmanuel takes to this tune and to his flatpicking in general—among them, fancy jazz reharmonizations (bars 17–20 and elsewhere), tricky chromaticism

(bar 56), and wild sweep picking (bar 84).

You could easily spend months learning this transcription in painstaking detail, but a more useful strategy would be to isolate a small handful of the phrases you find most compelling, practice them until you can play them cleanly at tempo, and memorize them, so that you'll be prepared to recall them when improvising on the tune.

Just as important as the notes is the vibe of the piece—try to channel Emmanuel's exuberant energy as you work through it. **AG**

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The image shows four LR Baggs Align Series acoustic pedals: ACTIVE DI, REVERB, EQUALIZER, and SESSION. Each pedal is made of wood and features various knobs and switches for sound customization. The background is a blurred bokeh of warm and cool lights.

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Fast (♩ = $\overset{\text{3}}{\text{♩}}$)

E

The image shows a musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". It consists of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The bass line is written in eighth and sixteenth notes. The score is divided into four measures, each containing a measure of music and a measure of bass line. The bass line is written in a simplified notation using numbers 1, 2, and 0, with some numbers having a slash and a 2 above them, indicating a specific rhythmic pattern.

E7

9 **E7**

0 0 4 4 2 2 4 2 2 2 4 4 2 2 2/4 2 0 0 2/4 4 2 2 4 2 0 0 4 4 2 2 2 0

[illegible]

GUITAR BOOGIE

Cont. from p. 47

E7

21

sim. throughout

A7 **E7** **To Coda**

25

3

B7 **E6** **G6/E** **F#6/E** **F6/E**

29

E7

33

A7 **G6/B** **E7**

37

GUITAR BOOGIE

Cont. from p. 49

61 **A7** **E7**

65 **C9** **B7#9** **E7**

69 **E7b13**

73 **A6** **E6**

77 **C9** **B7#9** **E7** **A/C#** **Am/c** **E**



81

A7

85

E7

C9

89

B7#9

E E7/D A/C# Am/c E

D.S. al Coda

Coda

93

Guitar cont. ad lib

84

177

B7

rit.

179

E7

Gdim7 F#dim7 F13

Cont. on p. 52

GUITAR BOOGIE

Cont. from p. 51

D Outro Free time

182

184

188

190

E_{sus2} E_{7/D}

192

C_{#7sus4} C_{maj7} C_{add9} F₁₃ E_{7#9} E_{9#11}

* Smack strings with picking hand.

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Getting Ready for the Gig

6 simple steps to preparing for a performance

BY DAVID HODGE

What do you see when you picture yourself performing? Do you see a rapt audience hanging on your every note as you play and sing? That's a great picture, right?

Now, do you see yourself practicing performing? Not so much.

In fact, you're probably wondering what practicing has to do with performing at all. But if you think about it, it makes perfect sense. As the educator Gerald Klickstein writes in his book *The Musician's Way*, "To become a professional-grade performer, you have to master an array of skills . . . And the only way to gain fluency with those skills is to practice them."

Just as you had to practice to learn to play the guitar, you need to practice your actual performance in order to minimize anxiety and fearlessly command the stage. Here are some of the simple things you can do to make

every performance a memorable one, for both you and your audience.

1 USE THE SAME EQUIPMENT YOU'LL HAVE ONSTAGE

Obviously, you're going to practice with your own guitar. But it's surprising how many people don't rehearse with a microphone even though they almost always perform with one. Take the time to get as comfortable with the mic as you are with your guitar. Learn where to place it so that you make optimal use of it. This can vary from person to person, but remember that your voice comes out of your mouth and not your chin! If you tend to sing to one side or the other, then have the microphone on that side at an appropriate angle.

Tom Serb, the director of the Midwest Music Academy in Plainfield, Illinois, advises, "When you're practicing with a microphone, try

to lean away from it when you're singing louder. Pros call this 'working the mic,' and it will help whoever is working the soundboard avoid problems."

2 SWEAT THE DETAILS

Will you be performing standing or sitting? Will you need a music stand? If you're playing in a group, will you be positioned so that you can make eye contact with each member of the band as well as your audience? Do you swing around when you play? That's great, because the audience can tell if you're enjoying yourself, but you need to know how much physical space you occupy when performing.

That space should also account for the extra items you invariably carry around—including essential backups. "Make sure you have extras of everything: guitar strings,

picks, patch cords, batteries, fuses for your amp, etc. I can't tell you how many times I've needed a spare something or other in the middle of a performance," Serb says.

3 PRACTICE YOUR ENTIRE SET, INCLUDING PATTERN

Putting together a set list is an art, and people tend to have their own ways of doing so. Some focus on the beginning of the set and some on the end. Still others may work from both ends toward the middle.

Once you have your set organized, be sure to practice it as you would perform it.

"Even if you've got your set list committed to memory, have a copy with you. When you've got the adrenaline of being on stage, you might draw a blank," Serb says. "I tape a printed copy of the set list to the back of my guitar; if I need to refer to it, I just tip my guitar forward and I'll be sure of what's coming next."

Practicing the whole set includes chatting up the audience. Don't think you'll just ad-lib something and then find yourself either at a loss for words—or, worse, saying something that you later regret.

4 HAVE FRIENDS OR FAMILY LISTEN TO A PRACTICE PERFORMANCE

Ideally, this will be someone you can count on to tell you that you botched the melody or that you're constantly speeding things up or slowing them down. You might also try a practice performance where the audience listens but also does distracting things, like getting up and walking around or talking to each other, to simulate a club environment.

Another excellent pre-performance option is to make a video of your set, from the audience point of view. Nick Torres, a guitar teacher and performer in the Washington, D.C. area, says, "Presentation is a bigger part of an audience's enjoyment than you think. Always look to see what they will see. A lackluster performance will really hurt a song's reception. I'm always amazed at the difference in what I think I'm presenting to the audience versus what they are actually seeing. Seeing yourself from the audience's point of view can really help you hone your performance."

5 MEMORIZE YOUR MUSIC

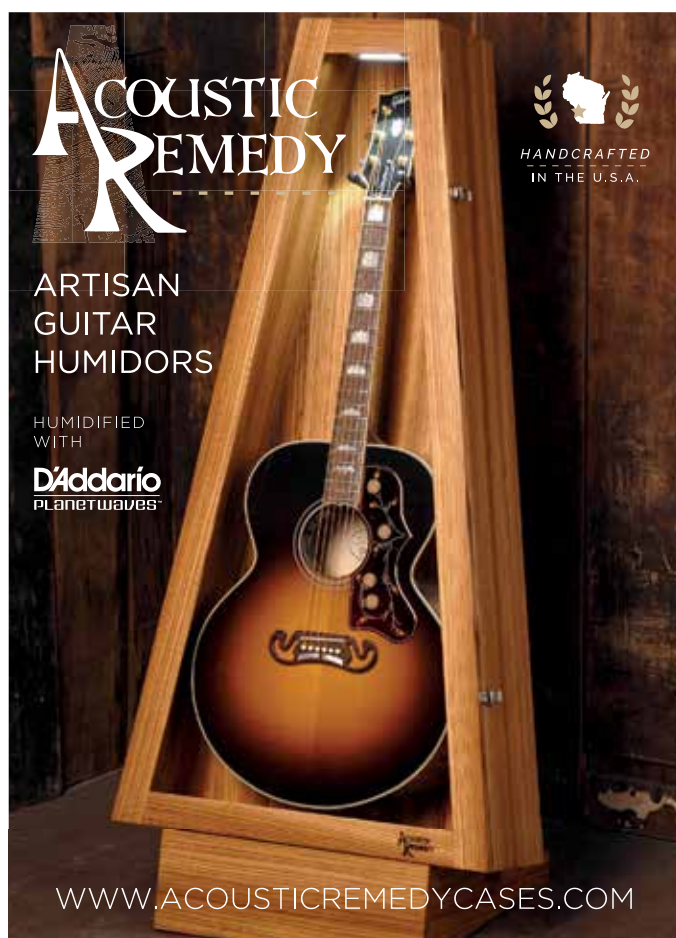
It might be convenient to use a music

stand or tablet, but that can be distracting to your audience. Consider this pearl from *The Musician's Way*: "When you memorize deeply, you gain maximal freedom on stage and enjoy unfettered communion with the listeners."

To practice, try starting a song at any place at all—the third line of the second verse, for instance. This will help you recover quickly from memory lapses and give you the confidence to know that you can pick up a song if you happen to skip a line or two.

6 PRACTICE CONNECTING WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

You want your audience to have a personal experience with you and not remember you as having spent the entire time with your head in your music or looking down at your guitar. Make eye contact. When you practice, pick out random areas of the room and make a deliberate attempt to check them out from time to time, like you (ideally) check your mirrors when you're driving. When you look around at the people watching you and listening to you, you share the experience and give them something to remember. **AC**



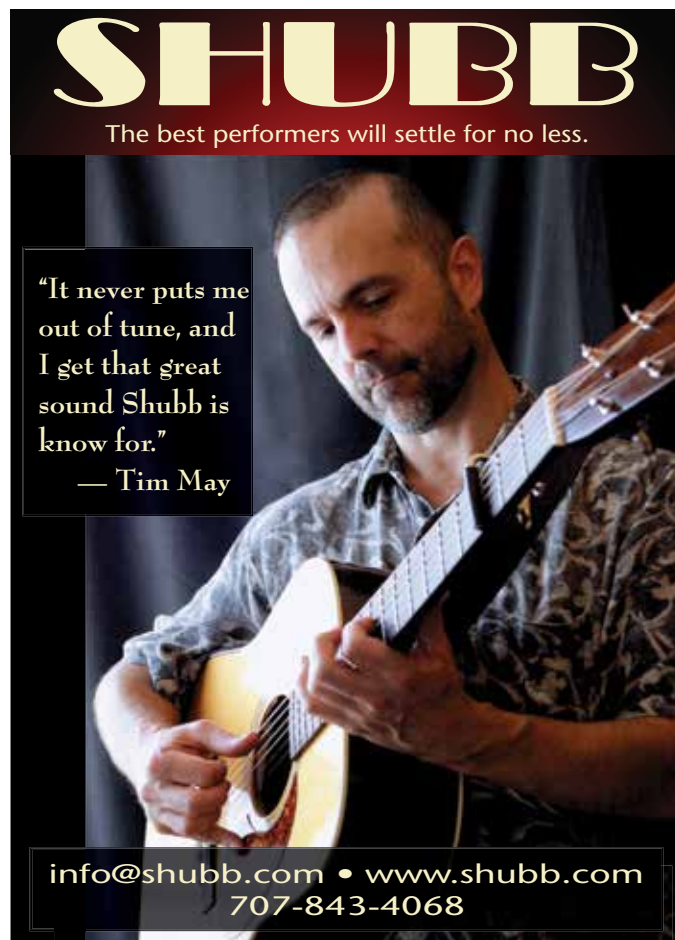
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Slow and Steady

How to clean up your playing by taking things down a notch

BY PAUL MEHLING

THE PROBLEM

You want to play with more clarity and precision—especially at faster tempos.

THE SOLUTION

Learn to play fast by practicing slowly; make sure that you play everything with 100 percent accuracy before bringing it up to tempo.

It's become quite fashionable to embrace the practice of slowness. I've seen books and articles on slow weightlifting and slow eating and on and on. But all trendiness aside, I'm here to tell you to slow yourself down and play with precision.

As an older musician who still spends hours in the woodshed, I have discovered that the things I didn't work on yesterday will come back to haunt me eventually. That is to say, you may as well iron out all the wrinkles as you go along the road of musical development, otherwise you'll eventually be confronted with the limitations that are keeping you from playing the way you imagine. In the long run you'll save time and have more fun along the way with these basic principles that you can apply to any style of music.

1 WORK ON SOMETHING INCREDIBLY SIMPLE

When I was studying violin in my 20s, I had an eccentric teacher who taught me how to focus my tone. His lesson was really quite simple: don't play badly—and listen to yourself. After I demonstrated that I was capable of playing with a beautiful tone, he said, "Play 'Twinkle, Twinkle' like Itzhak Perlman." I replied, "I can't play like Itzhak Perlman," and he quipped, "How hard can it be? It's just 'Twinkle, Twinkle.'"

I want you to keep that in mind forever and to play every note with 100 percent perfection and intention. It's all basically "Twinkle, Twinkle" (Example 1) when you get down to it. In other words, everything you play is "easy" if you play it slowly enough. Try to avoid getting caught up in thinking you should be playing faster, because speed is only earned by flawless repetition.



2 APPLY THE CONCEPT TO THE NUTS AND BOLTS

Perfection should be the goal, even if that means subjecting your ego to the fact that your music needs improvement. You will play better when you can feel the strength of playing with confidence. So, you may need to build upon your skills instead of forcing yourself to play far above your skill level.

If you can think of practicing beyond just playing the notes—i.e., putting your fingers in the right places—and look at your practicing as an opportunity to track down and replace ineffective movements in your hands, then you'll be on the right track. Consider untangling a knot: whether on earbuds, shoelaces, or a guitar cable, it's a slow process of studying the mess and creating a plan to undo the problem.

When practicing scales and arpeggios, like the ones here in C (Examples 2 and 3), you can start applying these untangling techniques by beginning with simply listening deeply to what you're playing. Does it sound clear? Are all the notes equal in volume and tone and duration? If not, slow down and play them again while listening to each note and comparing them all. In most cases, this should be enough to illuminate a spot or two that needs work—perhaps you have a finger that doesn't press the string all the way down, for example. Fix it.

3 PUT IT IN CONTEXT

Every classical violinist I've met does this: when they get a new piece of music to learn, they play through it at half of the tempo

marking. If the quarter note is 180 bpm, they'll start at 90 bpm or slower and read through it, looking for tricky spots to focus on later.

They will then work on the problematic areas thoroughly before going back to the piece at half tempo and playing through it with as much accuracy as they're capable of. Then they speed up the tempo in tiny, minuscule amounts, gradually working their way up to—and slightly beyond—the needed tempo.

What does this mean for you? Whether you're learning a hot jazz tune like Django Reinhardt's "Rhythm Futur" by playing the melody in progressively shorter note values, as demonstrated in Example 4, or trying different fingerings for a Bach cello suite (Example 5), do this: Look at everything you're practicing, consider just playing everything at half tempo (at first), and play with 100 percent (OK, 98 percent) accuracy and perfection. Work like this for a month, and you'll be making better progress, and faster.

When you play with accuracy, control, confidence, and perfection, you start feeling those endorphin rushes in your brain, which can be extremely helpful in encouraging you to keep playing slowly and to keep practicing for longer and longer periods of time!

Paul "Pazzo" Mehling is the founder and lead guitarist of the Hot Club of San Francisco, a group dedicated to performing and recording Gypsy jazz. Mehling conducts clinics and private lessons and is a staff teacher for the Jazz Masters Workshops.



Example 1

Example 2

Example 3

Cmaj7 Dm7 Em7 Fmaj7 G7 Am7

Example 4

Example 5



OLIVIA WISE

Son House

A guide to the intense stylings of the legendary Delta blues musician

BY PETE MADSEN

Eddie James “Son” House (1902–1988) played and sang the blues as if he were possessed by demons. It might never be known whether this intensity was due to a conflict between his work as a bluesman and his role as a preacher or to some other phantom, but there is plenty of video footage from the 1960s to give you a taste of the power and intensity of his performances.

Son House was born near Clarksdale, Mississippi, and grew up with a musical father who played the tuba and drank heavily. Eventually, the senior House gave up the bottle and became a Baptist deacon. The younger House also took to religion and eschewed the blues until, at the age of 25, he heard a fellow musician playing a bottleneck guitar and became obsessed.

Not long after House began playing at juke joints and parties, a fight broke out at one of his performances, and he shot a man. He was sentenced to 15 years at the infamous Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman, but was released after just two years.

In late 1929, Son House crossed paths with bluesman Charley Patton, and the two performed and recorded together off and on until Patton’s death in 1934. House eventually gave up music but was rediscovered by blues revivalists, who found him living in Rochester, New York, in 1964. He went on to perform with blues artists like John Hurt at venues such as the Newport Folk Festival.

From the 1960s on, House usually played a 1930s National Duolian. His style was a

visceral mix of string popping, bottleneck slide, and dramatic physicality. Though he favored open tunings like G, D, and D minor, he sometimes used standard. In this lesson we’ll focus on House’s work in open G (low to high: D G D G B D). Remember, to get into this tuning, lower strings 1, 5, and 6 down a whole step from standard.

I, IV, AND V CHORD MOVES

House’s best-known song, “Death Letter Blues,” is the inspiration for **Example 1**—a passage anchored with a dead-thumb bass pattern and punctuated by single-string slide lines. Videos of House on YouTube reveal that the bluesman wore a bottleneck on his third finger and held the slide at a severe angle.

Note that while this is fine for single-string lines, it's not ideal in terms of intonation for playing two or more strings at a time.

Example 2 reflects the I-chord (G7) phrases in the verses of "Death Letter Blues." Key to this figure is the repeatedly bent third-fret B \flat . Nudge the string subtly, such that the pitch lands somewhere between the B \flat and B \natural . This creates a nice tension between the major and minor third—a signature blues sonority.

In songs like "Death Letter Blues," "Jinx Blues," and "Low Down Dirty Dog Blues," House played IV-chord passages similar to the one demonstrated in **Example 3**. Here the chord's root, C, is played on string 5, fret 5. Note that House sometimes played the fifth (G) instead as the lowest note, on the open fifth string. To play Ex. 3, bar strings 1–5 at the fifth fret and use your third finger to grab the eighth-fret B \flat . If this is too much of a stretch, wear your slide on your third finger and grab the B \flat with your fourth finger.

Example 4 depicts a move from the V chord (D7) to the IV and uses the same techniques as the previous figure. In **Example 5**, you'll see the I-chord phrases similar to what House played on "Jinx Blues." The bluesman was known for his prodigious snapping moves on the bass strings. To cop this approach, place your picking hand's thumb under the sixth string and snap or pop the strings—in this instance, as you play a smoothly descending bass line. I use the blade edge of a thumbpick to get underneath the string before picking. This makes for a dramatic rhythmic effect.

Two phrases inspired by House's intro to "Special Rider Blues" are shown in **Examples 6 and 7**. To play Ex. 6, ditch the bottleneck, maintain a steady bass pattern, and embellish the melodic phrases with finger slides and hammer-ons. Ex. 7 brings your bottleneck back into the fray. Notice the welcome change in texture that

occurs after the first beat, when the bass drops out. A phrase on the upper strings takes over until the third measure, at which point it yields to a melodic idea on the lower strings.

Example 8 is similar to the I-chord phrases in "Low Down Dirty Dog Blues." The slide lines are focused at the 12th fret and employ two and three strings. I would recommend forgoing technical authenticity in favor of intonational



His style was a visceral mix of string popping, bottleneck slide, and dramatic physicality.

accuracy for this phrase. Remember, House's slanted slide sometimes gave him a slightly out-of-tune sound—forgivable, as his performances were so intense. To achieve pitch accuracy when playing Ex. 8, line your slide up with the given fretwire.

In **Example 9**, you'll learn a IV–V move similar to one House played in "Low Down Dirty Dog Blues." There's a nice juxtaposition between the down-stemmed bass notes, which

are played squarely on the beat, and the up-stemmed notes, which are more rhythmically active.

Example 10 is based on House's version of "Walking Blues." Focus on the bass line, which uses a syncopated phrase and hammer-ons. In the third bar, after the repeat, play a slide phrase similar to that in "Death Letter Blues," and then move up to the 12th fret with the slide.

WALKING AND TALKING BLUES

I've put House's ideas together in a 12-bar piece I call "Walking and Talking Blues" (**Example 11**). The first four bars combine the "Death Letter Blues" opening with the descending octave bass run from "Jinx Blues." Then there's a move to the IV chord in the fifth bar, leaving the fifth string open. I added a backward roll on the second beat of bar 6; pick this flourish with your ring (a), middle (m), and index (i) fingers.

In measure 7, for the return to the I chord, I have taken the B \flat microtonal bend from Ex. 2 and pitted it against the open B string to create tension. The move to the V chord in measure 9 is exactly like Ex. 4. Here I'm borrowing the C7 chord move from "Low Down Dirty Dog Blues" (Ex. 9). I finish things off with one more descending octave run, culminating in a bass-focused slide lick.

To really capture the essence of Son House's guitar style, it's best to go beyond the page and watch some of his performances. I would never suggest sacrificing accuracy, but intensity and passion are perhaps the most prominent characteristics of House's playing. Find a median between technique and emotion and you will be heading in the right direction.

Pete Madsen is a San Francisco Bay Area-based guitarist, author, and educator who specializes in acoustic blues, ragtime, and slide guitar. learnbluesguitarnow.com

Cont. from p. 59

Example 8

G7



Example 9

C7

G7

Example 10

G7

Example 11

"Walking and Talking Blues"

G7

C7

G7

D7

C7

G7

The solo in Example 13 finishes off with an A-minor chord shape at the 12th fret.



Chutes and Ladders

How to build solos around chord shapes

BY JEFFREY PEPPER RODGERS

Chord shapes are great tools for expanding the range and flexibility of your guitar solos—in any style. They can help you get your bearings up and down the neck and find phrases and riffs that truly lock in with a song's chord changes.

In the June 2017 Weekly Workout, I introduced a shapes-based approach to soloing, using the open grips of C, A, G, E, and D moved around the neck—aka the CAGED system—to generate soloing ideas. The lesson's examples were derived directly from the chord shapes—the solo lines were simply arpeggios or were based on chord tones. That approach works

well. When you're soloing over a C major chord, for instance, you can cover a lot of ground playing the notes of a C chord (C, E, and G) in various combinations and registers.

But of course there are a lot more notes you can use in a solo than just the three or four notes of the chord. In this lesson, you'll go a step further and explore notes you can add in *around* the chord shapes to give yourself a wider and more versatile soloing vocabulary.

WEEK ONE

Throughout this Weekly Workout you'll be soloing over the same chords: the straightforward eight-bar progression in the key of Am shown in **Example 1**. In terms of feel, you're in the ballpark of minor-key blues/jazz tunes like "Summertime" and "St. James Infirmary." You can play this progression with an alternating bass/strum, as shown; strum downstrokes on each beat in a swing style; or come up with your own picking pattern if

you prefer. Record yourself playing through the example a few times so that you can solo over it in the rest of the lesson.

Example 2 applies the shapes approach in the way that was used in the previous lesson. All of the notes in the solo come directly from the chord shapes shown in the diagrams above the staff. So in the first four bars of the solo, play notes found in the open Am, Dm, and E7 shapes. The rest of the example is based on shapes at the fifth fret, except for a quick dip down to the fourth fret for the E in measure 7. If you imagine you've got a capo at the fifth fret, you're using an Em shape for the Am, a G shape for the C, an Am shape for the Dm, and a C shape for the F. That's the CAGED system in action.

WEEK TWO

Now check out the notes that you can add around those open chord shapes. Starting with the Am chord, play **Example 3**, which climbs

Beginners' Tip #1

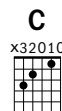
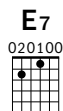
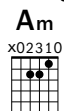
If you play with a pick, use all downstrokes for Example 1 (except for the pairs of eighth notes, as shown).



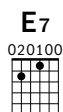
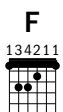
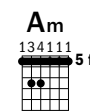
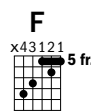
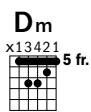
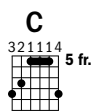
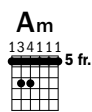
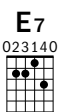
WEEK 1

Example 1

Swing (♩ = ♩♩)

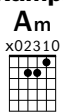


Example 2

WEEK 2

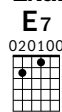
Example 3



Example 4



Example 5



from the low E to the high E. Visualize the Am shape as you play, and notice when you're hitting one of the chord tones (A, E, and C). On the fourth, third, and second strings, for instance, you're moving chromatically from the open string to the fretted chord tone.

The idea is that when you're soloing over an Am, or using the Am shape up the neck, you can incorporate any of these notes, ascending or descending or jumping around as you wish. In essence, the example lays out a vocabulary for soloing over the chord. You could arrive at a similar result by thinking in

terms of a scale with passing tones added between scale degrees, but here the conceptual map comes from a chord shape.

Try the same thing on a Dm shape in **Example 4**, an E7 in **Example 5**, a C in **Example 6**, and an F in **Example 7**—these cover all the remaining open chord shapes used in **Example 1**. Again, notice where the chord tones are, and which notes you are playing around and between them.

Examples 8–11 run through a few other essential open chord shapes, for D, Em, G, and A. You'll notice that Examples 9 and 10 are

similar—they're built around Em and G, which are related chords that have two notes in common—but not interchangeable. Each one emphasizes the chord shape it's based on in a slightly different way.

WEEK THREE

Now that you've got a map of notes to use with the various chord shapes, try putting it to work over the **Example 1** progression.

The solo in **Example 12** stays entirely in open position—all the lines are based on the open chord shapes shown above the staff. Compared with **Example 2**, which used only chord tones, now you're playing more chromatically—often moving by half steps up to notes in the chord shape. In jazz, these notes leading up or down to a chord tone are often called approach notes. Think of them as chutes and ladders you can take between the stable platforms of chords.

Even if you're playing this solo example with no backup, you should be able to hear the chord progression implied by the single notes. To highlight the chords more, emphasize the chord tones within the solo, just by picking them a bit harder than the approach notes.

WEEK FOUR

To close out this workout, move up the neck for **Example 13**. Start at the fifth fret for the first two measures, playing lines based on the Em shape (for Am) and Am shape (for Dm), then head up to the seventh fret. In measure 4, walk up the fourth, third, and second strings successively to

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Beginners' Tip #2

As you play these solos, keep a mental picture of the underlying chord shapes in your mind.

Beginners' Tip #3

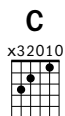
The last two examples use lots of triplets: three eighth notes played in the space of one beat. Count them as "One-and-a, two-and-a, three-and-a, four-and-a."

Beginners' Tip #4

Remember that chord shapes at the 12th fret are the same as open chord shapes—they're just an octave higher.

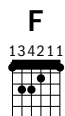


Example 6

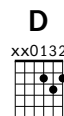


Musical notation for Example 6, featuring a treble clef staff with a melody and a bass clef staff with a bass line. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, while the bass line uses a mix of eighth and quarter notes with some triplets.

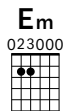
Example 7



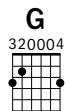
Example 8



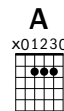
Example 9



Example 10



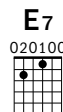
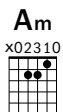
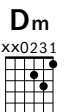
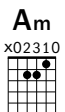
Example 11



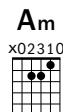
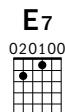
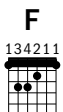
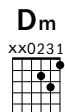
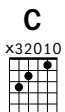
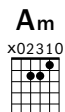
Musical notation for Examples 9, 10, and 11, showing a continuous melody and bass line across three measures. The notation includes various fingerings and a triplet in the final measure.

WEEK 3

Example 12



Musical notation for Example 12, featuring a melody with triplets and a bass line with various fingerings. The notation is spread across four measures.



Musical notation for the bottom section of Example 12, continuing the melody and bass line with triplets and various fingerings across four measures.

outline an A shape, as in Example 11 (moved up to the seventh fret, so it sounds as an E).

In the last four bars, use the shapes to guide you up to and down from the higher regions of the fingerboard, up as far as the 12th fret. On the Dm, use the top of the 10th-fret barre chord shape for a little chordal riff. And in the last measure, play two double-stops

derived from the Am chord shape at the 12th fret, sliding quickly off the final notes to add a little punch to the ending of the solo.

Now leave the tab behind and try making up your own solos over this progression. Work with the chord shapes and look for ways to walk up to and down from them. Although you are orienting yourself visually, of course the

sound is what matters—so let your ears, not your fingers, be your ultimate guide.

Jeffrey Pepper Rodgers, Acoustic Guitar's founding editor, is author of The Complete Singer-Songwriter, recently published in an expanded second edition, and the video series Learn Seven Grateful Dead Classics for Acoustic Guitar. jeffreypepperrogers.com

WEEK 4

Example 13

The image displays a musical score for the song "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. It includes guitar and bass parts with chord diagrams and tablature.

Chord Diagrams:

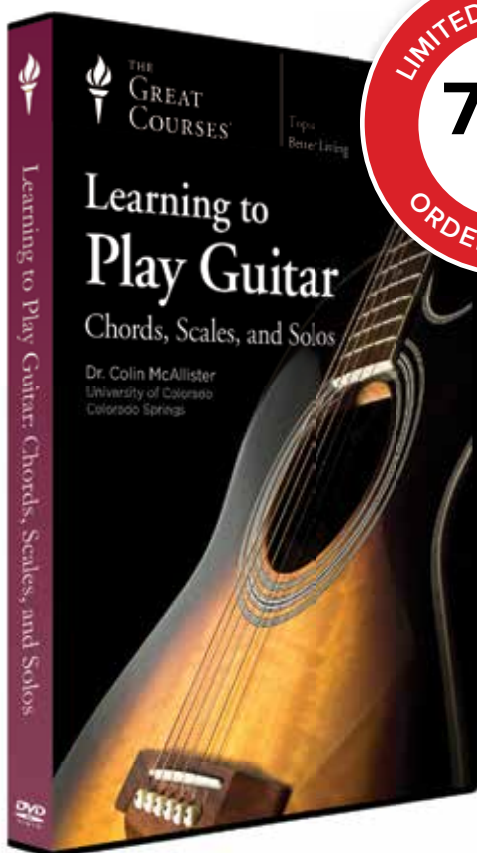
- Am:** 1 3 4 1 1 1 (5 fr.)
- Dm:** x 1 3 4 2 1 (5 fr.)
- Am:** x x 1 3 4 2 (7 fr.)
- E:** 1 2 3 4 1 (7 fr.)
- Am:** x x 1 3 4 2 (7 fr.)
- C:** x 4 3 1 2 1 (12 fr.)
- Dm:** 1 3 4 1 1 1 (10 fr.)
- F:** 3 2 1 1 1 4 (10 fr.)
- E7:** 3 2 1 1 1 4 (9 fr.)
- Am:** x 1 3 4 2 1 (12 fr.)

Tablature:

The guitar part features a melody line with triplets and a bass line with various fret numbers (e.g., 7, 6, 7, 5, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 10, 8, 9, 7, 8, 9). The bass part features a bass line with various fret numbers (e.g., 10, 9, 10, 13, 12, 13, 10, 13, 10, 12, 11, 10, 12, 10, 11, 12, 13, 10, 13, 12, 9, 12, 10, 13, 13, 14).

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

As you experiment with adding notes around the chord shapes, don't be afraid to hit notes that clash a little with the harmony—if you move through them and land on a more consonant note, the momentary dissonance can have a cool effect. In this example, I'm adding in the dissonant D# over an Am chord, G# and F# over the Dm, and C and A# over the E chord but then resolving each time to a chord tone.



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Can't Find My Way Home

Exploring a classic rock gem

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

The English supergroup Blind Faith—Steve Winwood, Eric Clapton, Ric Grech, and Ginger Baker—might have been together for less than a year, but it produced one of the most enduring songs in the entire rock canon. “Can’t Find My Way Home” first appeared on the band’s only album, 1969’s *Blind Faith*, and has since been covered by everyone from Swans to Bonnie Raitt.

The notation here, based on the original studio recording, depicts the four-bar

progression that forms the foundation of the song. It’s heard in the intro, verses, interlude, and outro. In this part—and throughout the song—two acoustic guitars interact in a delicate web of sound. The higher guitar plays bluesy fills while the lower guitar plays a mix of arpeggios and fills.

Stick with the second guitar part if you’re playing “Can’t Find My Way Home” on your own. You could work it up in standard tuning as written, or in dropped-D with minor

adjustments—for instance, play from the open G chord with your third finger on string 6, fret 5, and your first finger on string 1, fret 3.

Key to playing the song is capturing its loose, improvisatory feel. A good way to go about this is to scrutinize the chord grips and make sure that they’re securely under your fingers and that you can smoothly switch between them. Then, using the notation here as a guide, explore your own variations on this moody chord progression. **AG**



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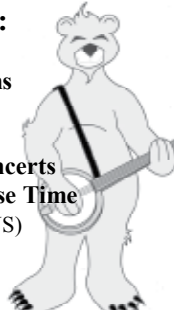
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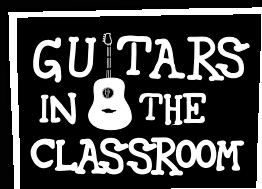
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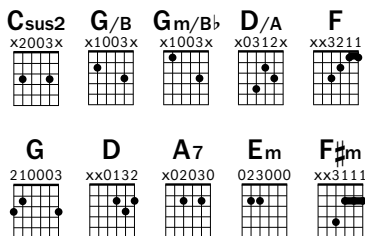


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Intro

Guitar 1 tuning: D A D G B E

Chords



Guitar 1

Chords: C^{sus2}, G/B, G^m/B^b, D/A

Guitar 2

let ring throughout

Chords: F, G, D

etc.

etc.

Intro (play progression 2 times)

C^{sus2} G/B G^m/B^b D/A
F G D

1. Come down off your throne and leave your body alone

F G D
Somebody must change

C^{sus2} G/B G^m/B^b D/A
You are the reason I've been waiting so long

F G D
Somebody holds the key

Chorus

G/B A7 D
Well I'm near the end and I just ain't got the time

Em G F#m Em D
And I'm wasted and I can't find my way home

Interlude (play Intro progression 2 times)

2. Come down on your own and leave your body alone
Somebody must change
You are the reason I've been waiting all these years
Somebody holds the key

Repeat Chorus

Outro (play Intro progression 5 times, with ad lib vocals)

Tag (with ad lib vocals)

F G D
F G D
F G D



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MAMIE MINCH

How to Shop for a Used Guitar, Part 3

Getting inside a guitar, noticing neck angle

BY MAMIE MINCH

Parts 1 and 2 appeared in the January and February 2018 issues, respectively, and are also available at AcousticGuitar.com

When you're searching for a new-to-you guitar, it pays to be curious about all aspects of your potential instrument's well-being. So far in this series, I've talked about ways to shop for vintage or used guitars:

doing a basic once-over to find any issues, scrutinizing a neck, what to think about cracks and seam separations, how to tell if a bridge needs to be re-glued, and what a difference a refret can make.

In this installment I'd like to talk about a couple of ways to get deep when assessing a guitar. First, have a peek inside the body. It's helpful to bring a mirror and flashlight along

when you go to look at a guitar. Think about it like popping the hood on a car—if you know what you're looking at, you can tell a lot.

As always, the prices I mention are a general range. Costs can vary—a lot—depending on where you live and the proficiency of your tech. Don't be tempted to bargain shop when getting a repair quote! Repairs are like tattoos: you get what you pay for.



Mamie Minch

GOT A QUESTION?

Uncertain about guitar care and maintenance? The ins-and-outs of guitar building? Or a topic related to your gear? Ask *Acoustic Guitar's* resident repair expert Mamie Minch. Send an email titled "Repair Expert" to Senior Editor Greg Olwell at greg.olwell@stringletter.com, and he'll forward it to Mamie.



If AG selects your question for publication, you'll receive a complimentary copy of AG's *The Acoustic Guitar Owner's Manual*.

BRIDGE PLATES

One big reason I look inside acoustic guitars is to check out the bridge plate. This piece of wood—often maple, but sometimes rosewood or another wood—reinforces the top and plays an important role in a guitar's sound and sturdiness.

When you look at a bridge plate, you want to see the strings' ball ends and the bridge pins popping down through holes that are clean and circular. Sometimes you see a bad pattern of wear. It could be because a softer wood was used to make the bridge plate or because of how it's been handled. The holes can be ragged or worn, and the wood between them may have been gouged away.

Don't be tempted to bargain shop when getting a repair quote! Repairs are like tattoos: you get what you pay for.

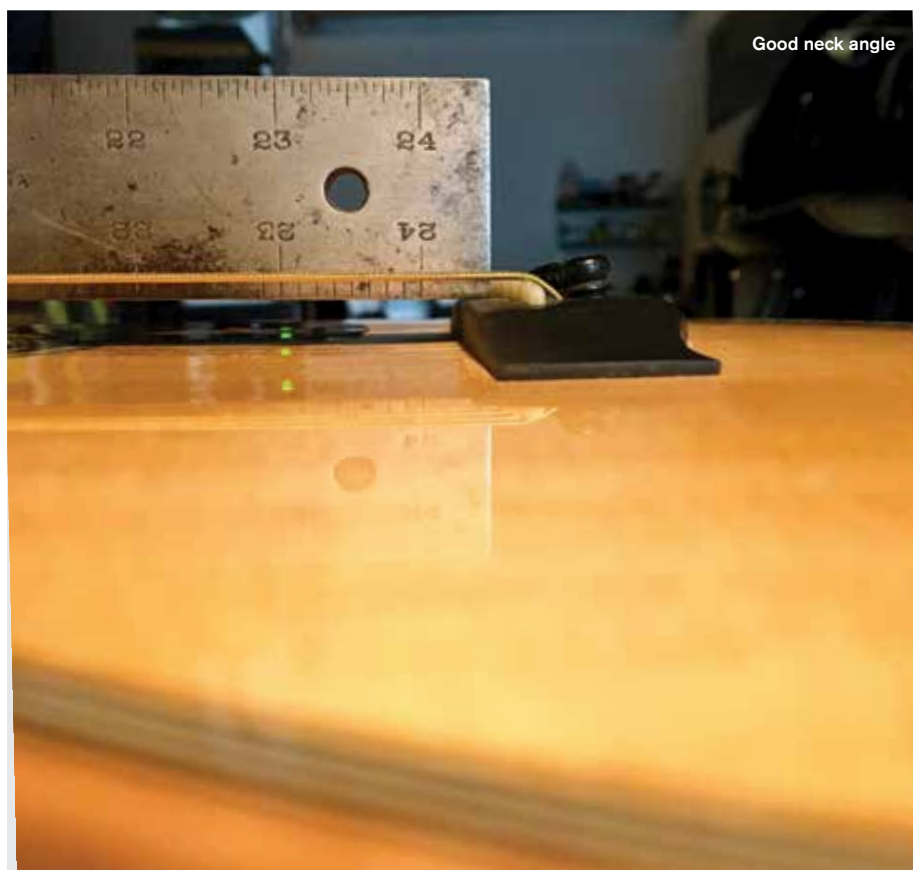
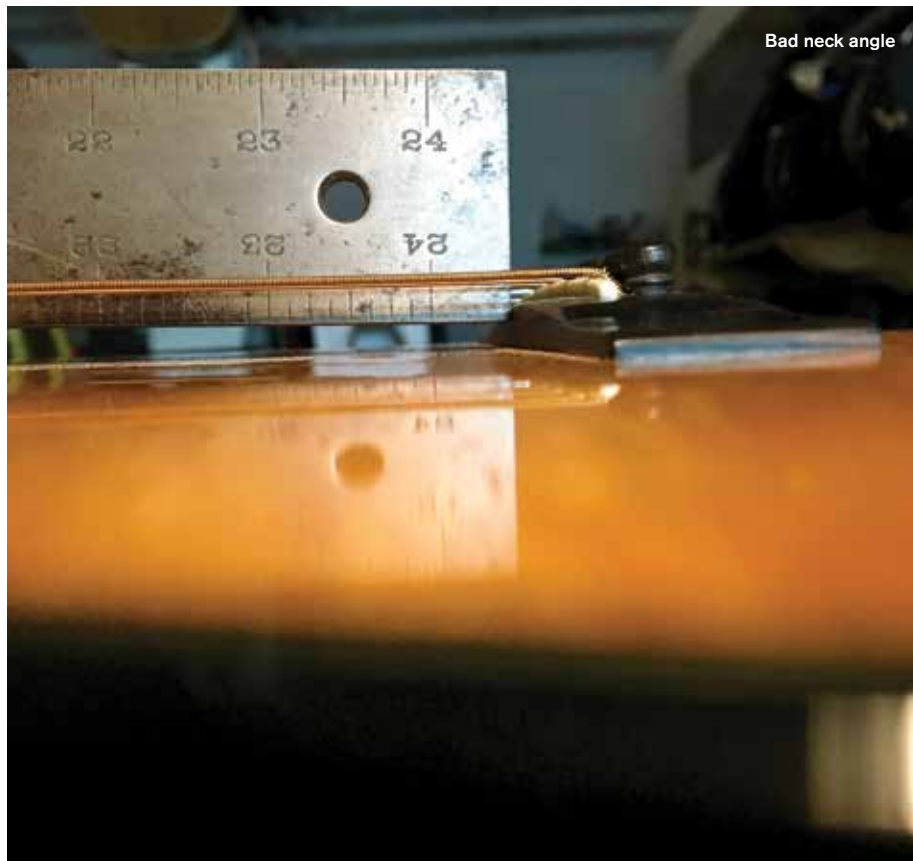
Sometimes, if a bridge that's pulling up goes unglued for a long time, the bridge plate will actually split. If the wear is bad, it may need to be repaired or replaced. This could cost anywhere between \$75 and \$400, because removing a bridge plate is tough and can be unpredictable.

Check out the rest of the inside of the box. If there are cracks, you'll be able to see if cleats—thin wooden patches—have been used. A couple of cleats and a neatly repaired crack or seam separation are not the end of the world. These fixes generally don't affect the sound, and you can tell something about the quality of work a guitar has endured by having a look at how neatly this has been done.

NECK RESETS

The last thing I want to cover is neck angle, and whether a guitar might need a neck reset. Of course, over time, strings put lots of tension on a guitar. Certain things are bound to give to that tension, and, as the angle of a neck pulls forward and the slight arch built into a guitar's back flattens out, you might find that the action gets higher and higher. Sometimes, problems are easy to spot: a very short saddle or a bridge that has been shaved down reveals that a previous repairperson tried to fudge things and lower the action without resetting the neck. The guitar won't sound as good as it could; the break angle over the strings will be shallow and the strings won't vibrate the top as much as they should.

Here's a quick way to get a general idea of neck angle, but it only works with a pretty



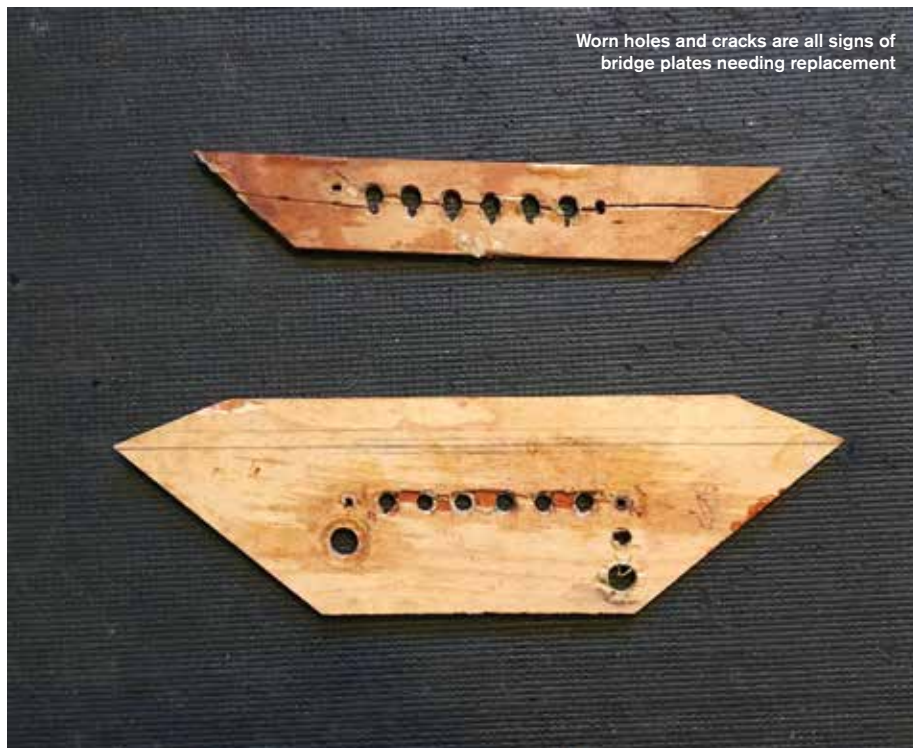
ASK THE EXPERT

straight neck and a full-height bridge. Take an 18-inch straightedge and lay it along the fretboard so that the end touches the bridge. If it sits just on top of the bridge, or almost does, that's probably a pretty good angle. If it dives towards the top, the angle is too forward, or shallow, and the guitar could need a neck reset.

Don't let these words make you feel panicked: lots of great guitars, including most vintage Martins, end up needing their neck angle reset over the course of their life. Thinking about price, remember that a reset is a major repair, and some shops always do a refret at the same time. This makes it a hard repair to price, as it could run anywhere from \$350 to \$1,000.

Even with a repair or two to consider, you still stand to get more for your money when shopping used or vintage. And of course, you can't reproduce the mojo of a cool old guitar. Hopefully this guide helps you find the perfect, broken-in guitar of your dreams.

Mamie Minch is the co-owner of Brooklyn Lutherie and an active blues player. brooklynlutherie.com





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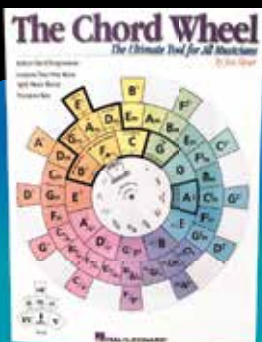
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Breedlove Oregon Concertina E Sitka Myrtle

A new small-bodied flattop dazzles

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

When Breedlove introduced its first original body style, the Concert, more than 25 years ago, it delivered a medium-sized instrument that was ideally sized and voiced for a wide range of guitarists and playing styles. The Oregon-based company has recently branched out with new designs at opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of size. Last year saw the introduction of the Concerto, Breedlove's interpretation of the classic large-bodied flattop, designed to be more comfortable to hold and play than the typical model.

Breedlove's response to the resurgence of smaller-bodied guitars is this guitar, the

Concertina, which is new for 2018. This 12-fretter's body silhouette is similar to that of its larger counterparts, but its interior air volume is quite a bit smaller—measuring 750 cubic inches, compared to 915 on the Concert and 1075 on the Concerto. I took a Sitka spruce-and-myrtle version of the Concertina for a spin and found its generous amount of sound and effortless playability impressive.

FINE-SOUNDING AND GREAT-PLAYING

Myrtle grows in coastal regions from Central California to Southern Oregon but, aside from Breedlove, few guitar makers have used this sustainable

alternative to tropical hardwoods like rosewood and mahogany. Breedlove believes that myrtle (*Umbellularia californica*) has the best tonal attributes of rosewood and mahogany—as well as the clarity of maple—and that it pairs well with Sitka spruce. Judging from my time playing the Concertina, it's hard to argue with the guitar's clear and sustaining voice, very good note separation, and overall responsiveness.

It feels natural to play old-school blues on a small-bodied instrument like the Concertina. During the time I spent with the guitar, I was also preparing the notation for an upcoming *Acoustic Guitar* blues instruction book by Steve James.



BREEDLOVE OREGON CONCERTINA E SITKA MYRTLE

BODY 12-fret Concertina size; solid Sitka spruce top with Sitka spruce X-bracing; solid myrtle back and sides; ebony bridge with 2-1/4" string spacing; natural gloss finish (top); semigloss finish (back and sides)

NECK Eastern rock maple neck; ebony fretboard; 25" scale length; 1.75" nut; nickel Breedlove tuners; semigloss finish

ELECTRONICS LR Baggs Element Active System VTC undersaddle pickup

OTHER D'Addario EXP16 strings (.012–.053); deluxe hardshell case

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This method covers a broad range of approaches in standard and open tunings, and the Concertina sounded terrific in these contexts. When I played an example in E, the alternating bass line had an impressive thump, while the treble-string melody, falling on both open strings and fretted notes, had excellent crispness—an attribute also apparent when I played James' arrangement of "Spanish Fandango" in open-G tuning.

The Concertina also takes well to pick-style playing. It puts out a surprising amount of sound for a small guitar, whether strummed heartily or picked delicately, and also has generous amounts of sustain and resonance. And speaking of smallness, the Concertina, with a body depth of four inches at the tail block, compared to 4-1/8 inches on a typical OM or 4-7/8 inches on a dreadnought, is lightweight and very comfortable to hold.

The Concertina plays as good as it sounds. Out of the box, the setup is perfect; the action is moderately low and there isn't any fret-buzzing.

With a 1.75-inch nut, a medium scale length of 25 inches, and a modern C-shape neck with a satin finish, it's easy and pleasurable to play. Not surprisingly for a Breedlove, it's very well built, inside and out. Things are spic-and-span with regard to the bracing and kerfing, the soundboard's finish has a faultless gloss, and the fretwork is unimpeachably clean.

I'd be remiss not to mention the Concertina's looks. It's a handsome guitar, nicely splitting the difference between traditional and modern aesthetics. The instrument's black binding contrasts nicely with the bloneness of the myrtle body and rock maple neck, and the old-school herringbone purfling and rosette balance contemporary details like right-justified position markers on the fretboard and Breedlove's asymmetrical wave headstock.

PLUG IN AND PLAY

Like many Breedlove guitars, the Concertina is outfitted with LR Baggs EAS VTC electronics—

an active system with an undersaddle pickup and small, soundhole-mounted controls. The pickup, a super-thin film sensor, was designed to capture the soundboard movement and to reflect all of the guitar's nuances. When I plugged the guitar into a Fender Acoustasonic amp, I found that these electronics do deliver on this goal. The sound was natural, detailed, and dynamic, without the boxy effect or unpleasant quack of some acoustic pickups, making the instrument a great tool for the gigging singer-songwriter.

THE BOTTOM LINE

With the Concertina, Breedlove has introduced an awesome guitar style that will appeal not just to fans of small-bodied instruments, but a wide spectrum of players. Its sweet, balanced voice, top-notch build, and understated appearance make it a wonderful companion. It'll be interesting, to say the least, to see how Breedlove will build on this new platform.

AC

Hughes & Kettner Era 1

Electric amp maker offers its first model for acoustic guitarists

BY PETE MADSEN

Hheavy-metal shredders have long favored Hughes & Kettner amplifiers, which pair grit and power with edgy designs, including clear acrylic chassis revealing glowing interior vacuum tubes, and ominous blue power-indicator lighting. But with a new foray into the arena of acoustic amplification, the German company shows a more subdued and elegant side. I auditioned the Era 1, a small combo amp whose mid-century modern appearance belies its great muscle and flexibility.

CONTROLS

Housed in a beautiful wooden cabinet, the Era 1 is sleek—with its inputs and dials hidden from view, it looks like half of an audiophile's home speaker system. It has four channels: the identical channels 1 and 2 are able to handle either XLR or 1/4-inch inputs and use phantom power, channel 3 uses a 3.5 mm mini jack for mp3 players, smartphones, etc., and channel 4 can be used as an effects loop or for another 1/4-inch line in. All inputs are on the back panel.

The tone-shaping adjustments for channels 1 and 2 dominate the top panel. The two main channels have dials for EQ, volume, and a selector for 16 different effects, as well as buttons for a 10db cut, mute, and tone shape. This last button activates an interesting feature that scoops out some of the mid-range and accentuates the bass and high frequencies. The EQ bands feature separate controls for bass, middle, and treble; however, a nifty EQ mode button offers different EQ voicings optimized for steel-string (mode 1) or nylon-string (mode 2) guitars.

SOUND

The Era 1 was designed and engineered in collaboration with noted engineer Michael Eisenmann, known for his previous work with AER amps. That formidable pedigree can be heard in the delightful sounds that emanated from the Era 1 during our time together.

I plugged in my Martin 00-18, which is fitted with a Fishman Matrix Ellipse Blend system. Right away, I could hear that this is one of the most natural and transparent amplifiers I have ever played through. Hughes & Kettner has somehow managed to avoid sacrificing warmth for clarity, while packing so much power into a small box. The Era 1 sounds exactly like my Martin does acoustically, though with 250 watts of power, it can get loud!





I fingerpicked my way through several prewar blues tunes in standard as well as open-G tunings. Some might argue that country blues does not require a sophisticated sound and that you could get by with a cheaper rig, but what you hear coming back to you from the Era 1 sounds so natural—and the details so present—that it can inspire you to reach new heights.

QUIBBLE QUASHED

One quibble I have with many acoustic guitar amplifiers are the onboard effects. They often seem like an afterthought; they're either not very good or there aren't enough adjustable parameters to give the player much control over the sound. Hughes & Kettner has come up with a solution that works well. The 16 effects include five kinds of reverb, delay, chorus, and flanger, with multiple presets of combinations.

The quality of the effects on the Era 1 is generally good. I was particularly fond of Reverb Hall Warm, which provided lush overtones to the overall sound. But there is a hidden feature that you might miss unless you read your owner's manual: you can adjust the effects to your liking. To set, say, a short delay to a song's tempo, all you need to do is select the effect, then press the EQ mode button until it starts to flash (about three seconds). You can now adjust the repeat time (for shorter or longer repeats) using the Channel 3/Aux in dial.

Taking all of these features together with its sound, the Era 1 is one of the best acoustic amps I've encountered. Its diminutive size, combined with stellar sound and ease of use, makes it a great acquisition for the gigging musician. Don't let Hughes & Kettner's reputation for delivering hard-rocking electric amps deter you from checking out this extremely well designed and executed acoustic combo. **AC**

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Bruce Cockburn
Bone on Bone
 (True North)

PLAYLIST

Anger Helps Fuel Righteous Return

Bruce Cockburn is still searching for answers on new album

BY KENNY BERKOWITZ

In the six years since *Small Source of Comfort*, his last album of new songs, Bruce Cockburn has gotten married, settled in San Francisco, become a father for the second time, and started going to church again. That's a lot, and it's only part of the story: Cockburn spent three of those years working on his autobiography, *Rumours of Glory*, and when it was finished, he endured a yearlong songwriting drought. "There was simply nothing left to write songs with," he said. "As soon as the book was put to bed, I started asking myself whether I was ever going to be a songwriter again."

That dry spell ended with "3 Al Purdys," a song composed for a documentary about Canada's "unofficial poet laureate" Al Purdy, whose best-known poem is about a pint of beer that's "half fart and half horse piss." Channeling Purdy's voice in lines like "the beauty of language set a hook in my soul; me like a bread crust soaking soup from a bowl" brought Cockburn back to songwriting, with the rest of the

eleven cuts following over the next two years. Unlike the songs on *Small Source*, these have no faraway travel to spark them, but because he's found himself in California during the current political climate, Cockburn has drawn inspiration from a world around him that feels foreign, drifting, a place where "everything is spinning in the looming entropy."

There's plenty of lyrical anger on *Bone on Bone*, from the "carcass of a tanker in the center of a stain" on "False River" to the "f----g detours" of "Mon Chemin" to the "uniformed monkeys" of "States I'm In" to the "flapping lips of flatulence [that] bellow 'Vote for Me'" on "Café Society." But alongside all that outrage, which has long been part of Cockburn's writing, there's a renewed sense of spirituality that's come from finding himself in church again after being away for decades. On more than half of these songs, he's joined by a choir from SF Lighthouse, whose calls and responses transform Cockburn's questions about God and

scripture into statements of purpose. They add their affirmations to counter doubt on "Stab at Matter" and "Forty Years in the Wilderness," and provide the full-voiced gospel momentum for "Jesus Train" and Rev. Gary Davis' trad "Twelve Gates to the City."

At 72, playing isn't as easy for Cockburn as it was ten or 20 or 30 years ago. The album's title is an allusion to his arthritis—before performances, he spends at least an hour warming up his fingers. But once he's ready, his picking—on six-string, 12-string, and resophonic guitars—remains a thing of beauty, deeply thought and deeply felt, with an older-and-wiser economy of notes that balances urgency and patience, shimmer and substance, rhythm and ornament. And on the disc's one instrumental, "Bone on Bone," Cockburn faces age head-on, combining a slow, steady, monotonic bass with a melody that's both soaring and weary—gliding between folk and jazz, and sounding as perfect as ever.

AC

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Acoustic Remedy Cases, acousticremedycases.com	55	Fishman Transducers, fishman.com	83	Shubb Capos, shubb.com	55
American Music Furniture, americanmusicfurniture.com	42	Guild, guildguitars.com	15	Steven Kaufman Enterprises, Inc., flatpik.com	14
Bose Corporation, bose.com/live1	41	Guitars in the Classroom, guitarsintheclassroom.org	68	Steven Kaufman Enterprises, Inc., flatpik.com	68
Bread & Roses, breadandroses.org	72	Guptill Music, guptillmusic.com	75	Sweetwater Sound, sweetwater.com	13
Breezy Ridge Instruments, Ltd., jpstrings.com	75	Honz Technology, LLC, tonewoodamp.com	74	Taylor, taylorguitars.com	2
C.F. Martin & Co., Inc., martinguitar.com	84	Kyser Musical Products, kysermusical.com	17	The Swannanoa Gathering, swangathering.com	14
California Coast Music Camp, musiccamp.org	72	L.R. Baggs, lrbaggs.com	46	Two Old Hippies, twooldhippies.com	33
Collings Guitars, collingsguitars.com	45	Media Brokers International, media-brokers.com	67	US Band and Orchestra, usbandsupplies.com	9
D'Addario & Company, daddario.com	4	Original Guitar Chair, originalguitarchair.com	75	Yamaha Corporation of America, yamaha.com	7
D'Addario & Company, daddario.com	11	Paul Reed Smith Guitars, prsguitars.com	53		
Dream Catcher Events, dreamcatcher-events.com	19	Radial Engineering, radialeng.com	12		

1961 D'Angelico New Yorker Special

**Unique features on
a stellar example**

BY GREG OLWELL

It's not surprising to see guitars bearing John D'Angelico's name with features that are unique to each instrument. As a custom builder working in his New York shop, he made guitars to satisfy each customer's needs and taste, and this special archtop, which blends elements of two of his most celebrated models, is no exception.

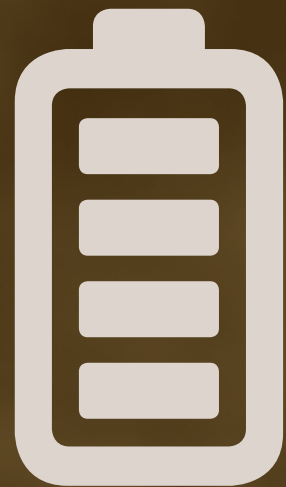
This amazingly clean guitar was made in the D'Angelico shop around 1961 for New York guitarist, teacher, and music store-owner Joel Frutkin, whose name is engraved on the stair-step tailpiece. The interior is stamped with number 2138, and according to the D'Angelico ledger reprinted in Paul William Schmidt's book on D'Angelico and D'Aquisto, *Acquired of the Angels*, it is among the final 30 guitars built by the famous maker.

Crafted at a time when John D'Angelico's assistant, Jimmy D'Aquisto, was taking a larger role in building and finishing the guitars, this guitar combines several features of the top-of-the-line New Yorker and the slightly less ornate Excel models. The large, 18-inch-wide body of this New Yorker model has a neck with the fingerboard and headstock inlays of an Excel. The light amber sunburst finish on this guitar was originally ordered to "look like bourbon" and has an uncanny resemblance to the finishes D'Aquisto began applying to his instruments during the '70s and '80s. Sometime in the '70s, the replica pickguard, which was made by Jimmy D'Aquisto, was cut to accommodate a DeArmond Model 1100 pickup.

With its 24-3/4-inch scale neck with a 1-3/4-inch-wide nut, this guitar, which is owned by swing guitarist Tony Marcus, is exceptionally playable for both chord work and solos. Its tone is delightful, with a fantastic dynamic range that spans from sweet sustain for delicate fingerstyle to a powerful output that can make an amp irrelevant when using big-band-style swing chords. **AG**



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